

MEDIEVAL TOPICS AND RHETORIC  
IN THE  
WORK OF THE CYWYDDWYR

Ann T. Matonis



Ph. D.  
University of Edinburgh  
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### Abbreviations

- BYU Barddoniaeth yr Uchelwyr. D. J. Bowen, ed.  
Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1957.
- CA Canu Aneirin. Ifor Williams, ed. 3rd. ed.  
Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1970.
- DGG Cywyddau Dafydd ap Gwilym a'i Gyfoeswyr.  
Ifor Williams and Thomas Roberts, eds.  
2nd ed. Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1935.
- GDG Gwaith Dafydd ap Gwilym. Thomas Parry, ed.  
2nd ed. Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1963.
- Geirfa J. Lloyd-Jones. Geirfa Barddoniaeth Gynnar  
Gymraeg. Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru,  
1931 -.
- GGK J. R. R. Tolkien and E. V. Gordon, eds. Sir  
Gawain and the Green Knight. 2nd ed. rev'd  
by Norman Davis. Oxford at the Clarendon  
Press, 1967.
- GP General Prologue to The Canterbury Tales.  
F. N. Robinson, ed. The Works of Geoffrey  
Chaucer. 2nd ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin  
Co., 1957.
- GPC Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru. Caerdydd: Gwasg  
Prifysgol Cymru, 1950 -.
- H Llawysgrif Hendregadredd. J. Morris-Jones  
and T. H. Parry-Williams, eds. Caerdydd:  
Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1933.
- IGE<sup>2</sup> Cywyddau Iolo Goch ac Eraill. Henry Lewis,  
Thomas Roberts and Ifor Williams, eds.  
2nd ed., 1937; rev'd. Caerdydd: Gwasg  
Prifysgol Cymru, 1972.
- OBWV Oxford Book of Welsh Verse. Thomas Parry, ed.  
Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1962.
- PF The Parlement of Fowls in The Complete Works  
of Geoffrey Chaucer. F. N. Robinson, ed.  
2nd ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1957.

- PKM Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi. Ifor Williams, ed.  
2nd ed., 1951; rpt. Caerdydd: Gwasg  
Prifysgol Cymru, 1964.
- RBP The Poetry in the Red Book of Hergest. J.  
Gwenogvryn Evans, ed. Llanbedrog, 1909.
- RR Guillaume de Lorris et Jean de Meun, Le  
Roman de la Rose. Felix Lecoy, ed.  
Paris, 1970.
- Tr. & Cr. Troilus and Criseyde in The Works of  
Geoffrey Chaucer. F. N. Robinson ed,  
Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1957.
- Trans.Hon.Soc.Cymm. Transactions of the Honourable Society of  
Cymmrodorion. London, 1892 -.
- TYP Rachel Bromwich, Trioedd Ynys Prydein.  
Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1961.

## Notational System

I have tried to follow the system of textual citations that appears in learned journals and scholarly books. However, since there is a fair amount of inconsistency from author to author, this will also be reflected in my notations. I have thought it best to use the notational systems that appear most frequently. Accordingly, I will cite the major texts in the following manner:

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| BYU              | followed by the number assigned to poem by Bowen, and then the line number.   |
| DGG              | followed by the number of the poem in the 1935 edition, and then the line number.   |
| GDG              | followed by the number of the poem in the Parry 1963 edition, and then the line number.   |
| H                | followed by the page number on which the text of the poem begins. In instances when reference is to a particular line that appears on a subsequent page, the page on which the line appears will be cited immediately before the line number. |
| IGE <sup>2</sup> | followed by the page number on which the text of the poem begins in the 1972 rev'd edition. In instances when reference is made to a particular line, the page on which that line appears will be cited immediately before the line number.   |
| RBP              | followed by the column number, and then the line number. In certain instances the page number will also be given, but will be clearly indicated and should not cause any confusion.   |

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## Chapter I

### Introductory Considerations

While foreign influences on certain areas of Welsh poetry have long been acknowledged, the extent to which the very fabric of Welsh verse reveals acquaintance with rhetorical methods and topics has not yet been examined in detail. It is my thesis that medieval Welsh poets employed rhetorical devices and topics which were widely represented in medieval European verse, and which often had their roots in classical antiquity.

The following chapters will examine the rhetorical colors and topoi as they appear in the work of representative fourteenth-century Welsh poets. Chapter II will give some indication of the shifting focus of the panegyric as it incorporated ideas of the medieval chivalric world. Chapter III surveys a number of rhetorical figures, while Chapters IV and V review popular medieval topics. Though it is not a topic that I can take up in full here, this introductory chapter will consider the wider medieval background of Wales in the fourteenth century - a transitional period in Welsh literary history which merits an entire volume.

Advances in historical knowledge and comparative literary criticism since the early decades of this century, when such men as Lloyd-Jones, Ifor Williams, Henry Lewis, H. I. Bell, J. E. Lloyd, Saunders Lewis and others made their seminal contributions to the study of Welsh literature,

have made the re-evaluation of medieval Welsh literary practice both  
<sup>1</sup>  
 necessary and timely. To date no comprehensive examination of historic-  
<sup>2</sup>  
 al factors and political forces at work in the Welsh poetry of the  
 transitional period between the Gogynfeirdd and the fourteenth-century  
 poets has been undertaken, nor has the potentially instructive analysis  
 of the period in terms of cultural developments and cross-cultural  
<sup>3</sup>  
 contacts been fully researched. Nonetheless, one does find sporadic  
 calls for such research which would establish more particularly the  
 forces and influences effecting changes in subject matter and mode of

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Added to new historical developments in methodology and treatment of evidence, is the appearance of comparative literary and cultural studies by E. R. Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages (New York: Pantheon Books, 1953); Eric Auerbach, Literary Language and Its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and the Middle Ages (New York: Pantheon Books, 1965); and Peter Dronke's two major efforts: Medieval Latin and the Rise of the European Love Lyric, 2 vols. (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1965), and The Medieval Lyric (Hutchinson University Library, 1968).

2

An early effort in this area was the M. A. thesis of C. H. Thomas, The Political History of Wales from 1350 to 1485 as Reflected in the Literature of the Period (University of Wales at Cardiff, 1936). More recently R. Ian Jack has commented on the importance of the literary sources as indices of historical information and allusion, appreciating, too, that "lyrical poetry of itself is evidence . . . of culture and taste." Medieval Wales in the Sources of History Series (London: Sources of History, Ltd., 1972), p. 40.

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Constance Bullock-Davies has made signal contributions in this area in her 1965 Gregynog Lecture, "Professional Interpreters and the Matter of Britain," (University of Wales Press, 1966), and in her more recent "Welsh Minstrels at the Courts of Edward I and Edward II," Trans. Hon. Soc. Cymm. (1972-1973), pp. 104-122.

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presentation. The comprehensive scholarship of J. E. Caerwyn Williams which synthesizes Welsh poetry and prose, both religious and secular, stands as a helpful, broad-scoped introduction to those interested in medieval Welsh literature, and our debt to him must be acknowledged.

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The question of external influences has been raised by a number of scholars, many of the discussions early and by now dated, others, including several recent pieces, too generalized and offering no detailed analysis of the texts themselves. However, D. J. Bowen, though he makes

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Such calls have been made by E. I. Rowlands in his essay "Iolo Goch," in the festschrift for Angus Matheson, Celtic Studies, James Carney and David Greene, eds. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968), pp. 124-146; and Rachel Bromwich in her "Tradition and Innovation in the Poetry of Dafydd ap Gwilym" (University of Wales Press, 1967). Professor Caerwyn Williams is no less aware of the need to research "the precise nature of the debt" that Wales owed to medieval Latin culture. "Medieval Welsh Religious Prose," Proc. of the Second Celtic Congress (University of Wales Press, 1966), p. 76. And, of course, Saunders Lewis and D. Myrddin Lloyd have long argued for medieval Welsh familiarity with classical aesthetic theory.

2

"Medieval Welsh Religious Prose," op. cit., and "Beirdd y Tywysogion: Arolwg," Llên Cymru, XI, 1 & 2 (1970), pp. 3-94, come particularly to mind.

3

By far the most comprehensive examination of the Welsh poetry of the period in terms of external influences remains T. M. Chotzen's Recherches sur la Poésie de Dafydd ap Gwilym (Amsterdam, 1927). This work is a repository of secondary sources and careful analysis of the themes of love and nature in Dafydd's work, arguing for familiarity with continental poetry. Excellent as Chotzen's study is, there is much to be added in terms of the other cywyddwyr. Other early articles, such as W. Lewis Jones, "Literary Relationships of Dafydd ap Gwilym," Trans. Hon. Soc. Cymm. (1906-7); W. J. Gruffudd, "The Connection between Wales and the Continent," Trans. Guild of Grad. (1907-8), G. Hartwell Jones, "The Italian Influence on Celtic Culture," Trans. Hon. Soc. Cymm. (1905-6), and similar work by others are well out of date. Only Rachel Bromwich, "Trad. & Innov.," op. cit., has assessed the problem with any critical acumen since Chotzen.

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For instance, D. Gwenallt Jones' widely quoted article, "Rhethreg yng Nghyfundrefn y Beirdd," Y Llenor (1933) which purports to be a critical examination, but does not single out so much as one rhetorical device for analysis.

no claim for foreign models and prefers to stress the conservative elements in Dafydd ap Gwilym's work, has nicely surveyed a number of rhetorical devices in Dafydd's verse.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, it should be stressed that borrowings and influences are not necessarily signs of native debility, but can be understood as vital signs of cultural development.

In short, and with few exceptions, Welsh literature and culture have been tacitly regarded as standing isolated from the main current of the European Middle Ages, distinguishable in its bardic traditions and long adherence to a native, insular concept of poetry. The challenge to Welsh insularity of tradition appeared somewhere in the period under discussion, or possibly predated it slightly; but it did not come suddenly with the fall of Llywelyn, nor did the literary acceptance or assimilation of "new" or "alien" ideas and motifs burst upon us full-fledged in the poetry of Dafydd ap Gwilym, though it certainly found its most dynamic expression there.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, in fourteenth-century Wales, we do not find one wholly homogeneous unit of literary expression or literary affinities. Literary loyalties were shifting as were political ones.

The shift from the patronage of the Princes to the patronage of the uchelwyr, for instance, indicates the breakdown of the old order. This

<sup>1</sup> "Dafydd ap Gwilym a Datblygiad y Cywydd," Llên Cymru, VIII (1964), pp. 1-32.

<sup>2</sup> That Dafydd's verse was not eccentric - either in theme or manner - has become apparent from Dr. Parry's rejection of many of the poems, so characteristic of his practice, from Dafydd's canon. This alone, as Glanmor Williams has remarked, means that "themes and manner thought peculiar to Dafydd had wider circulation." The Welsh Church from Conquest to Reformation (University of Wales Press, 1962), p. 198.



is seen in the reduction of encomiastic verse, in the particular ways<sup>1</sup> it was modified, and in the changes in the bardic system itself, as the pencerdd gave way to the teuluwr and clerwr. So, too, does cultural obsolescence appear in this poetry as native traditions and figures of comparison are replaced by foreign exempla. Thus, Gruffudd ap yr Ynad Coch's Marwnad Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, widely recognized as the last utterance of the official bards of the Princes, incorporates the traditional stock of eulogistic encomium, and sought no foreign figures for hyperbolic comparison. Yet, at approximately the same time, certain stock figures of comparison: Cadwaladr, Cynan, Bran - were being replaced by re-imported ones<sup>2</sup> (either from Geoffrey of Monmouth or the French Arthurian cycle.)

It was not in Wales alone that a shift from the old order was taking place. The invention of new metrical patterns from the twelfth century on characterizes the changes in several European vernacular literatures: for example, the canzone, rondeau, sonnet, terza rima, and ottava rima. A drive for stylistic virtuosity marks the Provencal efforts, while new ideas also found increasingly widespread expression. And, in France, a vital satirical spirit, which developed in such

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This will be seen in Chapter II, but it is also apparent in the vast majority of medieval literatures as the chief form of panegyric now becomes the praise of the Courtly Love mistress.

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Rachel Bromwich's introduction to Trioedd Ynys Prydein (University of Wales Press, 1961) reviews this material. Mrs. Bromwich notes that bardic allusions and stock figures of comparison remain uncontaminated by outside influence up to the close of the twelfth century, but that from the thirteenth century on, foreign matter infiltrates the tradition, and coincides with a decline in the knowledge of native Welsh tales among the bards.

narratives as Roman de Renart and the fabliaux, eventually made its way into lyrical poetry. According to Brian Woledge, it is

. . . not surprising that such great changes in literature have been described as revolutionary. It was not merely a literary movement, it was part of a profound and complex change in the outlook of the upper classes in Europe, a change shown by a more elegant and cultured life at the courts of the nobility, a higher standard of living, more leisure, more travel.<sup>1</sup>

We shall see how attractive such elegant and courtly trappings were to the Welsh bards in Chapter II where we survey forms of the panegyric, and in Chapter IV where the praise of courts is examined.

If the earliest poetry of Western Europe reflected the attitudes of a heroic, or feudal, or church-dominated society, the poetry from the thirteenth century on admits of themes and forms that appeal to a wider audience. The audience, in one sense, is the key to much medieval literary effort. For while a strong system of patronage exists under the aegis of the aristocracy, the literature will both reflect its tastes and celebrate its ideals. In the thirteenth century, however, the first germ of the modern spirit struggles against medievalism. A time of swift and marked progress in almost every sphere, the thirteenth century witnessed immense changes, such as the creation of the universities and the rise of scholasticism. Meanwhile social changes which would support a less courtly idiom were evolving. The fourteenth century, in turn, is marked by the growth of town life and the bourgeoisie,

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Introduction to the Penguin Book of French Verse, I (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1966), p. xxii.

by social mobility, and by the coming of age of the great vernaculars - Dante choosing to write in his native Tuscan; Chaucer and the Gawain-poet emerging meteoric after a French-dominated England. Throughout the fifteenth century the base was extending even further as the middle class grew in wealth and numbers, demanding a literature that would appeal to its tastes.

While the social situation, and changes in societal structure are roughly parallel, Wales always had a rich vernacular tradition. But it is probably significant that in Wales, too, the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were periods of literary change. Much of it can be dated to the establishment of the monasteries which were bound to bring Wales into the cultural milieu of the wider medieval world, infusing her literature with themes and notions of literary values drawn from the classics and the continent. Then, too, foreign domination, inter-marriage, and increased cultural contact with England would have had far-reaching implications.

Though the popular, "sub-literary" poetry of medieval Wales has not survived, we do have some verse that might be described as occasional, and which may in some respects reflect the vulgar strata. In much of this poetry there are elements that do not belong to a courtly context or to a system of patronage. Poems are addressed to animals (the fox, hare, stag, etc.), to other poets, to a purse. These poems merit a separate category, although they are decidedly "literary" topics with counterparts in other European vernaculars, as will be seen in Chapters IV and V.

Poems which reflect an awareness of existing social, political,

and moral conditions are also widely represented in medieval poetry. Complaints against the times form a distinctive category of medieval satirical verse attested in Welsh (e. g., Gruffudd Llwyd's I Owain Glyndŵr; IGE<sup>2</sup>.125, and the opening lines of the anonymous Moliant i Rys Gethin o Nanconwy; IGE<sup>2</sup>.109), in French,<sup>1</sup> and in English (Chaucer's Lack of Steadfastness, the Harley lyric, The Song of the Husbandman, and a number of anonymous poems printed by Robbins in his anthology).<sup>2</sup>

Death-bed poems and retractions are likewise medieval phenomena. Siôn Cent's I'r Saith Bechod Marwol (IGE<sup>2</sup>.255) finds parallels in the Harley lyric, An Old Man's Prayer, which reviews and rejects the same worldly evils, in the last stanzas of the palinode of Chaucer's Troilus, in Chaucer's own retraction, and in Dafydd ap Gwilym's Edifeirwch (GDG 106). While we have isolated a number of literary topics in Chapters IV and V, reasons of space did not permit exhaustive treatment. Yet it should become apparent that the everyday world, the poet's activities in it and sensitivities to it, and the sense of one's own encroaching mortality all combine to yield a variety of verse that is in every respect typically medieval. This poetry is best regarded as a testimony to the growing secular spirit, with a frame of reference that has visibly shifted to encompass the pedestrian

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See Angel Flores, ed. and trans., An Anthology of Medieval Lyrics (New York: Modern Library, 1962), pp. 107-109.

2

R. H. Robbins, ed., Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries (Columbia University Press, 1959) includes poems on "The Wicked Age," on popular struggles, and poems critical of existing institutions.

as well as the courtly. Moreover, poetry is no longer an exclusively social craft; it now appears to have an individual function and value.

If Wales was an entity which participated in two cultures - the dynastic period of independence and the medieval world of England, France, and late Latin influence - this will also be reflected in her literature. It is to be hoped that her medieval poetry will be better appreciated when its component parts are more comprehensively understood.

The forces which determined the development of medieval literature naturally varied through the many centuries of its development. Nonetheless, it is possible to draw the broader outlines of its history, characteristics, and development as well as some of the more salient influences on it. These influences, in varying degrees and manners, affected all literatures of western Europe of the period, including Wales, though as we have noted, Wales differed sharply in her uninterrupted use of the vernacular.

Initially, it should be observed that one literary language transcended all other linguistic boundaries: Latin. Medieval Latin literature dominated a substantial bulk of the literary effort of the period.<sup>1</sup> Its remains include lyric poetry, satire, saints' lives, tracts on philosophy and theology, encyclopedias and compendia of knowledge, the works of the Fathers, patristic exegesis, etc. In its more secular appearance, medieval Latin literature followed

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An extensive review of the poetry with a large and helpful bibliography can be found in F. J. E. Raby, A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages, 2 vols. (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1957).

classical models closely, was very conscious of rhetorical rules of style,<sup>1</sup> and offered models of the greatest importance to the developing vernacular literatures.

Latin, as the medium of literary expression, gave way to the continental vernaculars in the eleventh century. At this time, French literature begins with religious narrative verse which was often the work of scholarly poets, familiar with the devices of rhetoric and the classical writers, particularly Virgil. Thus, very early in the history of the European vernaculars, elements of style and structure inherited from Latin models became imbedded in their literary works, both in France and elsewhere. Such elements of style could readily have been transmitted sub specie, as it were.

The courtly romance emerges around 1150 and its subjects are drawn mainly from antiquity - after Virgil, Statius, Dares, and from the Celtic world. Such matière, as we know, reached Wales. Manuscripts of Ystorya Dared (c. 1300-1350), versions of the Latin Historia Daretis Phrygii de excidio Troiae,<sup>2</sup> and, according to Michael Lapidge, Virgil's Aeneid, Georgics, and Eclogues, Statius' Thebaid, and other classical texts (Ovid, Lucan, Martianus Capella) were known in early medieval Wales.

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Curtius and Auerbach, op. cit., amply cover this topic.

2

"The Welsh-Latin Poetry of Sulien's Family," Studia Celtica, 8 (1973), pp. 68-106.

Both the French romances and allegorical literature were widely disseminated throughout Western Europe by the close of the thirteenth century. Medieval poets and romancers drew on their themes, expanding and adapting them to their particular purposes, as a sources-and-analogues study of any major medieval text will show.

The debt that European poetry owed to the troubadours is sufficiently well known as to require little comment here. It is enough to say that the Provençal love-lyric, like the courtly romance, became the common property of the Western world. Moreover, the French lyric had consequences beyond those of its courtly-love theme, for, as Atkins has indicated, the polished expression of the French lyric was greatly indebted to the rhetorical manuals. Further, "in influencing this French poetry, which became the model for all Western Europe, [the rhetorical manuals] gave direction to vernacular efforts."<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, the Latin secular lyric, also rhetorically mannered, flowered and became international, as can be seen from the MS tradition which ranges over the whole of Europe.

That the Celtic world should have remained immune from the community of medieval ideas and literary developments seems untenable. As Robin Flower maintained, Ireland was brought into the cultural orbit of Europe: "Partly through the influence of the new religious orders, partly through the literary interests of the new Anglo-Norman aristocracy. . . , the Latin and vernacular literature of medieval Europe gradually forced its way

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J. W. H. Atkins, English Literary Criticism: The Medieval Phase (Cambridge University Press, 1943; rpt. London, 1952), p. 118.

into the closely guarded domain of the Irish tradition."<sup>1</sup>

It is not unlikely that something equivalent occurred in Wales. Certainly the manuscript sources suggest a wide familiarity with a range of outside literature: religious tracts, didactic literature, popular romances, histories (including Orosius and Pliny), and the standard writers: Bede, Isidore, Gregory, Bernard, Peter Comestor, Eusebius, Stephen Langton, Jerome, Peter Lombard, the Pseudo-Dionysius,<sup>2</sup> and even a Cicero.

Thus, while Ireland and Wales differ sharply in their vernacular traditions from the rest of Europe, they were not isolated from the main currents of medieval secular and religious literary ideas and forms. Yet, in a comparative framework, it is one of the achievements of the Welsh literary tradition that she did not sacrifice her vernacular or her literary individuality. Rather, whatever she took she skilfully subjected to her own native genius. In the end, it was the creative individual vitality of a Dafydd ap Gwilym, fusing some of the old with some of the new, and transforming both to his independent vision that produced one of the supreme literary achievements of the Middle Ages.

The problem in determining medieval Welsh literary sensitivities, models and sources is complicated by the thorny question of bardic

<sup>1</sup> The Irish Tradition (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> Neil Ker, Medieval Libraries of Great Britain (London: Royal Historical Society, 1941) surveys the holdings of religious houses, cathedral and collegiate churches, and other corporate bodies. All the medieval writers listed above appear in twelfth, thirteenth, or fourteenth-century Welsh libraries.



familiarity with grammatical and rhetorical manuals. The studies which concentrate on this topic almost invariably assume the existence of bardic schools and assign great importance to Einion's Grammar. The assumption that native schools, either monastic or secular bardic institutions, not only passed down the native culture to the bards, but also introduced them to grammatical and rhetorical theories is undemonstrable, though plausible. But even if we assume that the grammars of Einion Offeiriad and Dafydd Ddu<sup>1</sup> reflect existing instructional proscriptions and prescriptions, neither in them nor in the tracts collected by G. J. Williams and E. J. Jones<sup>1</sup> is there instruction in the Latin rhetorical techniques of organization (dispositio) or style - the figurae verborum, tropes, colores. Yet a fair number of these appear in the works of some of the cywyddwyr, as Chapter III will demonstrate.

Certainly the assumption that if educational institutions existed in medieval Wales, they would be likely to be in monastic centers is a point well appreciated. The role the monasteries played in preserving and copying manuscripts is sufficiently understood, as are the contributions to medieval literature and thought made by the churchmen themselves. While we are well enough informed about the structure of liberal education - the trivium and quadrivium - the study of grammar, rhetoric, philosophy, music and classical authors to be studied and imitated, we can only conjecture that Welsh education would have followed the same lines. Again, this is likely, though ultimately not verifiable.

<sup>1</sup>  
Gramadegau'r Penceirddiaid (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1934).

Except for the Sulien family and the role they played in Cambro-Latin letters, we know very little about this facet of Welsh intellectual activity.<sup>1</sup> But at least their efforts do provide evidence of intellectual participation in the Latin Middle Ages.

That many writers of secular works in the Middle Ages received some education is certain, as is the fact that many of them were acquainted with the classical authors (in whom, of course, they would find models to imitate). Chaucer and Dante are ready examples. But we cannot always assume a clerical training. It would, indeed, be useful to know the extent of the knowledge of the Welsh poets and what spheres of influence they may have come under. For the present, however, we must rely on the texts themselves and carefully decipher their message.

And clues there are. Gruffudd Gryg incorporates the popular medieval themes of allegory into his verse: Avarice, Death, and the follies of this world. Llywelyn Goch ap Meurig Hen's I'r Benglog is firmly rooted in the tradition. Siôn Cent is well known for his moralizing verses, his treatment of the ubi sunt theme, and the vanity of the world - themes that "had been anticipated in Latin, English, and Welsh literature."<sup>2</sup> Iolo Goch scatters his verse with references to religious prose and sermon literature, as well as interjecting Greek and Latin

<sup>1</sup>  
For a discussion of the Suliens, see the Lapidge article, op. cit.; J. E. Lloyd, The Story of Ceredigion (University of Wales Press, 1937), his article, "Bishop Sulien and His Family," Nat'l Lib. of Wales Journal, and Vol. II, Chapter XII in his History.

<sup>2</sup>  
Glanmor Williams, The Welsh Church, op. cit., p. 238. See, too, Ifor Williams' remarks in the introduction to IGE.

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phrases. Gruffudd Llwyd, too, shows wide familiarity with non-native traditions, while his religious verse also incorporates Latin tags.

Gruffudd ap Maredudd's religious verse is intelligible within the context of the medieval religious lyric as his five long odes to the Rood at Chester testify. Later, Ieuan ap Rhydderch writes verse which reveals his broad knowledge of grammar, rhetoric, classical writers and their styles. Possibly educated in both the trivium and

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quadrivium at Oxford or Cambridge, Ieuan ap Rhydderch anticipates later anglicization processes that worked on Welsh youths sent to England after the Act of Union. But he is still a step or two removed from them in time and inclination. His wide learning also encompassed Welsh traditional lore, a careful knowledge of the rules of Welsh versification, and a pride in the poetic resources of his native language, as evidenced in the awdl he is said to have written in

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English in reply to an English student who derided Welsh poetic technique,

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Henry Lewis, Iolo's editor in IGE, points out that these phrases can be regarded as commonplace tags. However, they might also be taken as illustrations of a borrowed convention.

2

See Thomas Roberts' introductory remarks in IGE<sup>2</sup>, especially pages xxix-xxxvii, where he discusses Ieuan's education, knowledge of Latin, Priscian, Donatus, Virgil, Ovid, Livy, etc.

3

Roberts mentions the possible connection of Ieuan ap Rhydderch with the awdl to Mary, ascribed to Hywel Swardal, and to an Ieuan ap Hywel Swardal. Roberts, however, felt the attribution was difficult to establish. This poem and the circumstances of its composition are also mentioned by Sweet in his History of English Sounds (Oxford, 1888). See, too, E. J. Dobson, "The Hymn to the Virgin," Trans. Hon. Soc. Cymm. (1954-55), pp. 70-124.

Quite apart from literary considerations as to what value his verse may have, Ieuan ap Rhydderch's work is important to the history of Welsh literature in that it marks yet a further step in the transition from the old to the new, from a parochialism of ideas and traditions to a more catholic taste.

Before Ieuan ap Rhydderch, certain fourteenth-century bards, such as Iolo Goch, Dafydd ap Gwilym, and to a lesser degree, Gruffudd Llwyd, mark the direction the later poetry will take. They, as distinguished from their more conservative contemporaries such as Casnodyn and Dafydd y Coed, look beyond the native boundaries, and their verse abounds in heterogeneous materials. Their vocabularies are powdered with English loanwords, rhetorical figures and topics. We shall see in the following chapters that their ideas and poetic motifs have a striking resemblance to English and continental literary conventions.

It is this core of fourteenth and early fifteenth-century poets (one would add here, Rhys Goch Eryri and certain aspects of the work of Ieuan Waed Da) who merit close critical attention. Yet they have been cursorily treated for the most part, except for Dafydd ap Gwilym and the introductory remarks the editors of IGE have given them. A study which would establish their importance to the succeeding generation of poets, which would compare and contrast their verse with the work of their predecessors and more conservative contemporaries, would be a signal contribution to Welsh literary criticism.

Ordinarily it is granted that Dafydd ap Gwilym stands remarkably alone in the history of Welsh poetry. He may well have been the greatest

of his contemporaries, but I do not believe he stands alone - except for his remarkable talent. There is a danger in seeing him and his work as an isolated phenomenon. Put in context he still emerges with reputation untarnished, but he must be studied in relation to certain trends that appear in the works of other bards who, to a greater or lesser extent, reflect the shifting traditions of this transitional period.

It is a matter of some consequence that the concessions to outside influence are largely restricted to examinations of Dafydd ap Gwilym, to troubadour influences on the cywyddwyr, and to the foreign thematic material in the love poetry. This is narrow and painfully incomplete. The rest of the cywyddwyr remain virtually ignored; indeed, the vast corpus of the poetry is unedited and inaccessible. Consequently there is a conspicuous absence of stylistic studies, comparative analysis, and nothing at all on the history of ideas. The standard introductory surveys, such as Gwyn Williams' An Introduction<sup>1</sup> to Welsh Poetry, and H. I. Bell's The Development of Welsh Poetry,<sup>2</sup> accord Dafydd ap Gwilym some length, treat Iolo Goch and Siôn Cent somewhat less extensively, but devote no more than a few paragraphs to such poets as Gruffudd Gryg, Llywelyn ap y Moel, Llywelyn Goch ap Meurig Hen, Madog Benfras, and Ieuan ap Rhydderch. With some of the poets, H. I. Bell does not concern himself at all, while Gwyn Williams' comments are restricted to a selective catalogue to some of their

<sup>1</sup>  
Faber and Faber, 1953.

<sup>2</sup>  
Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1936.

poems, and a brief summary of themes. In neither survey are the following poets even mentioned: Casnodyn, Gruffudd ab Adda, Gruffudd Llwyd, Rhisiertdyn, Iorwerth ap y Cyriog, Ieuan Waed Da, Gruffudd ap Maredudd or Sefnyn. Granted, it is not in the nature of such introductions to provide inclusive examinations of the poets of a period, nor to analyze even the works they single out for attention in depth. Nonetheless, one does not get from either work a critical appreciation of the importance of the fourteenth century as a transitional period in the history of Welsh poetry.

Thomas Parry, toward the end of his Rhys lecture, observed that "in the closing years of the thirteenth century and the opening years of the fourteenth, interest in bardism was at an ebb."<sup>1</sup> E. I. Rowlands' perception of the significance of the fourteenth century is marked by his recognition "that the fourteenth century was a critical period in the evolution of bardism,"<sup>2</sup> and in the space of a few pages he adds all that is of critical importance in the scholarship to date regarding the roles of Dafydd ap Gwilym, Iolo Goch, and Gruffudd Llwyd as possible models to fifteenth-century bards. He assigns Iolo Goch a prominent position, along with Dafydd ap Gwilym, in the "conception of bardism" held by the fifteenth-century poets, adding that the "works of these two poets represent the decisive stages in the evolution from thirteenth-century court poetry to fifteenth-century praise poetry,"<sup>3</sup> with Iolo

<sup>1</sup> "A Welsh Metrical Treatise Attributed to Einion Offeiriad," Proc. Br. Acad., XLVII, (1961), pp. 177-195. Hereafter referred to as "A Welsh Metrical Treatise."

<sup>2</sup> "Iolo Goch," op. cit., p. 135.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 135.



Goch providing the link in the development of the praise poetry, and Dafydd ap Gwilym supplying the innovation in the techniques of cynghanedd and cywydd. Rowlands adds a brief note on Gruffudd Llwyd's contribution to the fifteenth century which is seen as "philosophical rather than stylistic," although Gruffudd's verse does contain "some of the most distinctive characteristics of the poetry of the mid-fifteenth century."<sup>1</sup> While Mr. Rowlands does not carry his analysis any further than the broad outlines set forth above, his remarks are cogently put and remind us that work in this area is long overdue.

My task here has been to describe the non-native features in the poetry of the cywyddwyr. Certainly there are many examples I have missed, and many connections that I have not drawn. I have avoided the question of deliberateness of intention, and only lightly touched upon possible avenues of transmission of ideas. Nor have I performed the one really vital task of the literary critic, i. e., the examination of the poetry in terms of its artistic value. But it is to be hoped that more able critics will find some of this a useful groundwork. And, it will be seen that the rhetorical tradition yielded a number of emotive possibilities, just as certain motifs and topoi afforded these poets a wider thematic range. That foreign literary conventions appear in the Welsh poetry of the Middle Ages is not surprising. Nor need it be looked on as an unfortunate if unavoidable contamination. That the Welsh bards should have remained culturally isolated in their literary conventions is opposed to all the facts of literary experience and

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 138.

history. Medieval Welsh poetry thus appears to be grounded in a continually evolving yet fundamental body of traditions, knowledge, tastes, and inclinations. What is to be regretted is that a large number of medievalists have little or no acquaintance with this remarkable body of poetry.



## CHAPTER II

Traditions of Panegyric in Welsh Poetry:  
The Heroic and Chivalric

Panegyric verse occupied a prominent position in the work of the Cynfeirdd, and, along with the elegiac, enjoyed a continuity of tradition and prestige well into the Middle Ages. The Cynfeirdd celebrate the martial deeds of the British warriors in their struggles against the English during the British Heroic Age.<sup>1</sup> The Gogynfeirdd essentially carry on the tradition of eulogy and elegy, commemorating the exploits of the princes and nobles in their battles against the Anglo-Normans. A clear picture of the heroic ideal emerges from this poetry. The hero was, above all, an illustrious warrior who fights steadfastly, and often against overwhelming odds, to the death. The Taliesin poems to Urien, Owein ap Urien, and Gwallawg fall easily into the category of encomiastic verse which emphasizes the military qualities of the hero. The Gododdin, a product of a "military aristocratic society," depicts the heroic ideals of that society:

. . .in which the real raison d'être, and the chief interest, of the nobility is warfare, and for which the accepted morality is courage and fierceness in war, generosity

<sup>1</sup>The characteristics of this literature have been amply surveyed by H. M. and Nora Chadwick, The Growth of Literature, vol. I (Cambridge University Press, 1932). See, too, C. M. Bowra, Heroic Poetry (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1952), and, for particular attention to the development of divergent attitudes towards this ideal in the work of Aneirin and Llywarch Hen, see: A. O. H. Jarman, "The Heroic Ideal in Early Welsh Poetry," in Beiträge zur Indogermanistik und Keltologie for Julius Pokorny (Innsbruck, 1967), pp. 193-211.

and liberality in peace, a longing for fame,  
a horror of disgrace, and a welcome for death  
in fight provided it leads to an immortal  
glory.<sup>1</sup>

These, then, are the essential qualities of the hero: prowess, courage, and generosity. The pre-eminence of the leader's military exploits formed the keystone of eulogistic poetry for both the Cynfeirdd and the Gogynfeirdd,<sup>2</sup> and continued to occupy a principal place in the verse of the fourteenth-century poets in their marwnadau and molawdau. While these characteristics have been widely recognized, little attention has been given to some of the less warlike qualities of the hero: beauty, agility, gentleness of manner, meekness, courtesy, eloquence, and wisdom.<sup>3</sup> Though these virtues are less conspicuous, they do receive the admiration

<sup>1</sup>K. H. Jackson, The Gododdin (University of Edinburgh Press, 1969), p. 38.

<sup>2</sup>Thomas Parry, for instance, has recognized that "the most conspicuous element in the eulogistic poetry [of the Gogynfeirdd] is the elaboration of the prince's exploits in war" with special emphasis accorded his "valour and his generosity - two special features of eulogy for centuries." A History of Welsh Literature, H. Idris Bell, trans. (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1955), pp. 52 and 53.

<sup>3</sup>E. R. Curtius, writing on the qualities of the ideal hero, has observed that "for eulogies of rulers epideixis had developed fixed schemata in Hellenistic times. Physical and moral excellences were arranged in series - for example, beauty, nobility, manliness. . . . Physical beauty is always a requisite, and the Middle Ages takes it over too; Biblical exemplary figures could, however, replace antique ones; David for strength, Joseph for beauty, Solomon for wisdom, and so on." (p. 180). In the same discussion he comments on the topos fortitudo et sapientia as it developed in the West from Homer through the Middle Ages. European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, Bollingen Series XXXVI (New York: Pantheon Books, 1953).

of the Cynfeirdd, while increasing attention is given to them during the period of the Gogynfeirdd. And, as we shall see in the course of this chapter, during the fourteenth century the tradition of panegyric was extended yet further to include heraldic references and reflections of the chivalric system of virtues.

The late fourteenth-century grammar attributed to Einion Offeiriad prescribes the qualities that should be praised in a lord and a baron.

Arglwyd a uolir o uedyant, a gallu, a milwryaeth,  
a gwrhydri, a chedernyt, a balchder, ac adfwyn-  
der, a doethineb, a chymhendawt, a haelyoni,  
a gwarder, a hegarwch wrth y wyr a'e gyueillon,  
a thegwch pryt, a thelediwrwyd corff, a mawr-  
urydwch medwl, a mawrhydri gweithredoed, a  
phetheu ereill adfwyn enrydedus.

Brehyr a volir o dewrder, a glewder, a chedernit,  
a chryfder, a chywirdeb wrth y arglwyd, a  
doethineb, a chymhendawt, a haelyoni, a digrif-  
wch, a thelediwrwyd corff, a boned, a phetheu  
ereill kanmoledic.<sup>1</sup>

(Trans: A lord is praised for possession [i.e., dominion], and ability, and ~~battle skill~~ and valor, and might, and ~~pride~~, and gentleness, and wisdom, and discretion, and generosity, and meekness, and amiability towards his men and his associates, and beauty of form, and beauty of body, and nobility of thought, and splendor of deeds, and other gentle, honorable things.)

A baron is praised for strength and prowess [or, daring], and might, and power, and loyalty towards his lord, and wisdom, and discretion, and generosity, and agreeableness, and beauty of body, and good breeding, and other commendable things).

<sup>1</sup>From Llyfr Coch Hergest in G. J. Williams and E. J. Jones, eds., Gramadegau'r Penceirddiaid (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1934), p. 16, ll. 1-10.

This catalogue of qualities is essentially repeated by Simwnt Fychan ca. 1575, though he makes some additions, particularly in regard to dress and signs of wealth.<sup>1</sup>

Though they do not comprise a sizeable body in the panegyric verse of the Cynfeirdd, we might survey some of the representative examples of the non-martial attributes of the early heroes. First, the quality of wisdom. Heledd describes Cynddylan as "radiant of sense" (beuyrbwyll)<sup>2</sup> and "worthy" (ovri).<sup>3</sup> Among the heroes of The Gododdin, several are singled out for similar praise: Erthgi is "a competitive man, a sagacious man, a lone champion" (gwr gorvynt. gwr etvynt. gwr llawr);<sup>4</sup> Gorthyn is a "generous, thoughtful, sage man" (hael etvynt doeth),<sup>5</sup> while an anonymous warrior is both a "leader of hosts, cruel of hand" (mynawc lluydawc llaw chwerw)<sup>6</sup> and "wise and perfect and proud" (doeth a choeth a syberw).<sup>7</sup>

Wisdom, prudence, and sense figure more frequently in the catalogues of virtues recorded by the Gogynfeirdd, and the chronicles. Whereas the

<sup>1</sup>Pum Llyfr Kerddwriaeth, in G. J. Williams, p. 132.

<sup>2</sup>XI, 6, a in Sir Ifor Williams, ed., Canu Llywarch Hen, 3rd ed. (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1970):

<sup>3</sup>XI, 6, a.

<sup>4</sup>English translation from Kenneth H. Jackson's The Gododdin, op. cit., p. 121. Welsh text from Ifor Williams' edition, Canu Aneirin, 3rd ed. (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1970), XIV, line 125.

<sup>5</sup>English translation, Jackson, p. 100; Welsh text, CA, edition, LXXXVII, line 1098.

<sup>6</sup>English translation, Jackson, p. 146; CA, text, LXXV.A, line 925.

<sup>7</sup>English translation, Jackson, p. 146; CA, text, LXXV.A, line 926.

early entries in the Bruts are terse and annalistic, the entries from the twelfth century on become noticeably fuller in their descriptive statements. Military might and generosity are now more commonly supplemented with references to the lord's mental and moral qualities. Thus while Gruffudd ap Llywelyn is commended in an entry for 1054-56 for being "fearless," and in 1061-63 for being the "shield and defender to the Britons,"<sup>1</sup> Madog ap Maredudd in an 1159-60 entry is eulogized as:

a man of great praise, whom God had formed with physical beauty and fashioned with wisdom untold, and filled with doughtiness and adorned with generosity. He was generous and kind and meek towards the poor and the meek, and harsh and unkind towards the warlike mighty.<sup>2</sup>

Similarly Llywelyn ab Owain Gwynedd is praised as:

the flower and splendour of the whole land, for he surpassed everyone in measure of praise, and his praise [was surpassed] by his intelligence, and his intelligence by his speech, and his speech by his manners.<sup>3</sup>

The praise accorded the Lord Rhys illustrates that the panegyric portrait of the excellent lord had become highly formalized:

and thus he increased twofold the nobleness of his mind, a counsellor as he was of his kinsmen and a conqueror of the mighty, and a defender of the vanquished, powerful stormer of fortresses, inciter

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Jones, trans., Brut Y Tywysogyon: Peniarth MS. 20 (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1952), pages 14 and 15 respectively.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

of armies, and assaulter of hostile troops.  
 . . .the hand of generosity, the eye and  
 lustre of worthiness, the summit of majesty,  
 the light of reason, the magnanimity of  
 Hercules! A second Achilles in the sturdiness  
 of his breast, the gentleness of Nestor. . .  
 the comeliness and face of Paris, the eloquence  
 of Ulysses, the wisdom of Solomon, the majesty  
 of Ajax!<sup>1</sup>

The Gogynfeirdd, too, gave fuller attention to the intellectual and more courtly qualities of their subjects, in some instances drawing upon the same traditions as the chroniclers of the Bruts. Thus Gwilym Ryfel addresses Dafydd ab Owain:

Rotes duw dri da6n y drin wychyd naf:  
           nerth erc6lff y6r trydyt,  
       doethinab selyf yssyt<sup>2</sup>  
       a phryd adaf ar dauyt.

(Trans: God gave three gifts to the battle-brave lord: the strength of Hercules is one of the three; the wisdom of Solomon and the beauty of Adam on Dafydd).

The estimable traits commonly eulogized were expanded in number and systematized into a more formal portrait by the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in the panegyric literature of Wales. Mrs. Bromwich's edition

<sup>1</sup>Jones, Brut Y Tywysogyon, p. 77. In this passage the influence of classical figures borrowed from the romances - and Dares in particular - makes itself most forcibly felt. The figures of comparison are not drawn from the native tradition. Mrs. Bromwich has reviewed the appearance of these heroes as standards of reference in her Trioedd Ynys Prydein (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1961). See, especially, her notes to Triad 47 and her discussion of the heroes in her "Notes to Personal Names."

<sup>2</sup>Llawysgrif Hendregadredd, transcribed by Rhiannon Morris-Jones and edited by John Morris-Jones and T. H. Parry-Williams, 2nd ed. (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1971), page 183, lines 17-20. Future references to this text will be cited as H.

of the Triads affords us a number of references to the formula: the beauty of Adam, the strength of Hercules, the wisdom of Solomon - and their variants.<sup>1</sup>

Inevitably, as the Heroic Age and the insular isolation of Wales gave way to the wider forces of medieval movements and influences, the heroic ideal was transformed. Certainly the hero still retains his military powers, but the coloring of romance makes itself increasingly felt. Ceremony, for one thing, becomes important, and the outward appearance of the knight, both in terms of his physical beauty<sup>2</sup> and his knightly trappings, is given more attention. The warrior in the court is now depicted as regularly as the warrior on the battlefield. The warrior elite are perceived as a social elite,<sup>3</sup> while Christianity softened the sharper features of the hero. The quality of mercy towards the oppressed, the widow, and the orphan became an additional requisite.

<sup>1</sup>See TYP, pp. 123-126. Compare, also, Bleddyn Fardd's marwnad to the last Llywelyn (H, 66, 25-26); and the qualities of wisdom, thought, and nobility praised by Llinos ap Gwgon in his eulogy to Llywelyn ab Iorwerth (H, 54, 9-12).

<sup>2</sup>There are, of course, scattered references to a hero's beauty in the work of the Cynfeirdd. The Gododdin, for instance, provides a fair sampling: Cibno son of Gwengad is "handsome" (i.e., cein; Canu Aneirin, CIII.1257; Jackson, p. 114); while of Cenau it is said "there does not travel the earth, mother has not borne, one so handsome and strong in his iron armour" (nyt emda daear nyt emduc mam; / mor eiryan gadarn haearn gaduc. Canu Aneirin, XLIX.555-56; Jackson, p. 135). On the whole, however, the Cynfeirdd did not regularly enough include references to a hero's beauty to allow us to consider it an essential part of a systematically drawn portrait.

<sup>3</sup>In a parallel development, the feudal fortress is now praised as a court, a place where social graces and past-times are cultivated. We will examine this topic in Chapter IV.



Here the influence of the Church is indisputable, for in 1095 at the Council of Clermont, Urban II issued an injunction that every nobleman and youth, every aspirant to chivalry, should swear an oath to protect the weak and the oppressed, not through pride, but through love and mercy. From this point on, this principle of chivalry vied with the military ideal as one of the chief elements in the knightly ideal.<sup>1</sup>

Just as inevitably, the chivalric ideal thus formulated at the Council of Clermont and popularized by the romances eventually became a studied public display, and finally a hollow fiction, although literature long continued to uphold a lofty standard for the knight whatever the reality might be. Poets and romancers perpetuated the fiction,<sup>2</sup> delighting in describing tournaments, armour, courtly and often exotic materials and trappings, as well as the chivalric virtues of the knight.

<sup>1</sup>The two chief elements of the chivalric system, war and religion, were officially wed in the Crusades, and, of course, it was at the Council of Clermont that Urban II launched the First Crusade. For a fuller discussion of the development, popularization, and decline of the chivalric ideals, see Raymond L. Kilgour, The Decline of Chivalry (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1937), and J. Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages (New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1954), especially Chapters IV-VII.

<sup>2</sup>It should be noted that they were supported in this by the royalty and nobility. The reigns of Edward II and Edward III in England, for instance, saw a flourishing of tournaments, Rolls of Arms, and ultimately the founding of the Order of the Garter. But against this romantic expression of ideals, perpetuated by noble and poet, was a harsher reality. Thus Parry writes: "in the eulogistic poetry it was not the life of Wales as it was, its lawlessness, its wrangling feuds, its diseases, and the poverty of the common people, that they described, but rather those abstract virtues which ought to be found in a nobleman, and which no doubt were found in many of them - courage and generosity above all, kindness, protection for the weak and poor, the gift of government, and at times education and culture." History, op. cit., p. 150.



Medieval views of epic heroism owe much to Trojan romances,<sup>1</sup> but depictions of the medieval hero as a chivalrous knight owe their debt to Arthurian romance. The chivalric system of virtues became more or less systematized by the fourteenth century, having gained such widespread popularity that very often the romancer or poet had only to sketch in the outlines. This, in fact, is what Chaucer does so egregiously in Sir Topas as he parodies the jargon of the metrical romances. Yet the more sophisticated artist treated his materials with fuller, and sometimes specialized, accuracy and care. And, when doing so, he often incorporated detailed heraldic references intended to supplement the chivalric virtues which he saw embodied in his knightly hero.

The literary fondness for heraldry and heraldic description appears in the thirteenth century although it certainly had earlier antecedents.<sup>2</sup> I will have more to say on the use of heraldic description in the work of the cywyddwyr later in this chapter, but as an immediate example I might here refer to the arming sequence in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight to illustrate the above points. The passage occupies almost a hundred

<sup>1</sup>It was largely through Dares Phrygius that the Greek and Trojan legends gained their wide popularity in the Middle Ages. Though the Welsh Ystorya Dared is dated ca. 1300-1350, Mrs. Bromwich has demonstrated that some knowledge of the Greek and Trojan heroes was certainly in circulation at least a century earlier. See TYP, pp. 123-126 and notes to the personal names, especially: Ector, Eneas, Erc6lf, Alexander, Paris.

<sup>2</sup>Anthony Wagner, writing in Heralds and Heraldry in the Middle Ages (Oxford University Press, 1956) remarks that around the beginning of the thirteenth century descriptions of shields, crests, and banners in the romances "begin to approach technical precision, the blazon of a knight's arms comes to be an integral and almost necessary part of the description" (p. 46).

lines, culminating in the description of Gawain's shield, the significance and appropriateness of which the poet then explains.

Then þay schewed hym þe schelde, þat was  
 of schyr golue3  
 Wyth þe pentangel depaynt of pure golde hwe3. . . .  
 For hit is a figure þat halde3 fyue poynte3,  
 And vche lyne vmbelappe3 and louke3 in oper,  
 And ayquere hit is ende3; and Englych hit callen  
 Oueral, as I here, þe endeles knot.  
 Forþy hit acorde3 to þis kny3t and to his cler arme3,  
 For ay faythful in fyue and sere fyue syþe3  
 Gawain wat3 for gode knawen, and as golde pured,  
 Voyded of vche vylany, wyth vertue3 ennoured  
 in mote;  
 Forþy þe pentangel nwe  
 He ber in schelde and cote,  
 As tulk of tale most trwe  
 And gentylest kny3t of lote.  
 (619-639)<sup>1</sup>

The poet's explication of the symbolic appropriateness of Gawain's charge, the pentangle, clearly aligns the abstract ideals of the chivalric system with their outward heraldic colors and emblems borne by the Knight. Thus, in discussing heraldic features as they appear in medieval literature we cannot avoid discussing the moral qualities which made up the chivalric ideal. In some of these we will be reminded of Aneirin's praise of the heroes of Gododdin; but whereas Aneirin's celebration of what we may call

<sup>1</sup>J. R. R. Tolkien and E. V. Gordon, eds. Sir Gawain and the Green Knight; 2nd edition edited by Norman Davis (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1967). Trans: Then they showed him the shield that was of fair gules with the pentangle painted in pure gold hue. . . . For it is a figure that contains five points, and each line overlaps and locks into the other, and everywhere it is endless; and the English call it overall, as I am told, the endless knot. For this reason it befits this knight and his bright arms, because always faithful in five ways and five times in each way was Gawain known for good, and as purified gold, void of each villainy, with virtues graced in castle; therefore the new pentangle he bore on shield and coat-armor, as a knight of words most true and the gentlest knight in speech.

the courtly virtues stems from an individual recognition of individual merits, the Bruts, the romances, and certain passages in the panegyric of the cywyddwyr suggest a more highly formalized set of closely grouped qualities which seem to have gained the status of a literary formula.

The chivalric system of virtues, as they were standardized in the fourteenth century, comprised a closely linked set of qualities: franchise or courtoisie, largesse, loiautee, pitie (often exemplified in the hero's role as a justicier), and prowess which implied not only skill at arms, but indomitability and rashness.<sup>1</sup> Supplementing these were the knightly accomplishments in tournament, with some of the quality of knighthood conveyed by the bright trappings of silk and color which we have come to think of as so medieval and courtly. Very often the description of knightly trappings rests largely on literary sources. Physical beauty, too, was highly valued, and soon became a stock feature; certainly it was an indispensable attribute of the romance knight.

Franchise or courtoisie was essentially the mark of the well-bred.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Gervase Mathew, "Ideals of Knighthood in Fourteenth-Century England," in Studies in Medieval History Presented to F. M. Powicke, ed. R. W. Hunt, et al. (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1969), pp. 354-62 reviews the appearance of these qualities in a number of romances. Kilgour, op. cit., provides a consideration of their historical bases and development, particularly in his introduction.

<sup>2</sup>D. S. Brewer has provided a comprehensive review of the semantic range of courtesy in the Gawain-poet's works, supplementing his discussion with references to the historical and religious temper of the age. He notes in the first paragraph of his essay that "courtesy, the virtue of courts, as such, is a medieval European invention, like universities and nation-states and other notable institutions. 'Courtesy' came to be a characteristic of much medieval literature (p. 310)." "Courtesy and the Gawain-Poet," in Chaucer and His Contemporaries, ed. Helaine Newstead (New York: Fawcett World Library, 1968), pp. 310-335.

It meant courtly manners above all, a gracious and courteous mode of behavior. It appears in Chaucer as gentillesse, and his works clarify the contemporary meaning of the epithet. In the Canterbury Tales gentillesse occupies a prominent position. The Knight and his son the Squire were born with it by virtue of their station. The bourgeois Franklin aspires to it by virtue of his monied position, the Prioress feigns it, the lowly hag in the Wife of Bath's Tale claims it and delivers a lengthy curtain lecture on its meaning. In the hag's lecture we can observe that the concept still retained some of its earlier moral implications; and so it was associated in French romance in its delineation of the coeurgentil. Chaucer's recurrent line: "pitee renneth soone in gentil herte" elucidates both gentil and pitee as related components of a standardized set.<sup>1</sup>

As Professor Jackson has observed, the heroes of the Gododdin were praised for gentle and courteous behavior, gentle blood and breeding.<sup>2</sup> For example, the hero of Jackson's A.14 was bold in battle but "in the palace the slayer was mild" (e mordei ystyngel adyledawr; CA. XIV, line 129).<sup>3</sup> Particularly relevant here is Aneirin's recognition of the hero's

<sup>1</sup>The more pointedly medieval connotations of courtesy as a reference to one's social status appear in PKM. Ifor Williams thus glosses dynyon mwyn (Pwyll, 23, line 10 in PKM) as "gentlefolk," equivalent to the Fr. gentilshommes (Pedeir Keinc Y Mabinogi; Caerdydd, 1964), p. 150; while he takes gwr mwyn to refer to a courteous, genial man (p. 155).

<sup>2</sup>The Gododdin, op. cit., p. 40.

<sup>3</sup>Professor Jackson's translation, p. 121.

more civic and social duties when he says of the hero of CA.XLVI: "he was civil to the suppliant who approached him" (oed mynut wrth olut ae kyrchei; line 532).<sup>1</sup>

This quality continued to be esteemed by the Gogynfeirdd, as several references will indicate. For instance, Gwalchmei, eulogizing Madog ap Maredudd, speaks of him as the "jewel of gentleness: (kein aduwynada6d; H, 16, 19). Bleddyn Fardd calls Llywelyn ap Gruffudd the "most courtly" (lly6 llysseitaf; H, 58, 19); while he refers to Owein ap Gruffudd ap Llywelyn as "courtesy's gift" (ywein uab gruffut uut uynogi; H, 68, 1) hygar ("amiable") appear frequently in the panegyric of the Gogynfeirdd, both as epithets and descriptive adjectives. Cynddelw addresses Owein ap Madog as llary ywein (H, 119, 17) and Madog ap Maredudd as hygar (H, 119, 3). Gwalchmei describes Madog as "meek and courtly" (llary llysauc; H, 25, 28) and "amiable" (hygar; H, 26, 8 and 9).

The cywyddwyr, too, record the amiability, courtesy and pleasant manners of the lords they eulogize. "In a rhetorical question: "Was he not pleasant and without boast?" Gruffudd Gryg calls attention to Rhys ap Tudur's humility:

Pand oedd ddigrif a difalch  
(DGG ~~LXXX~~, 41)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Professor Jackson's translation, p. 134.

<sup>2</sup>Ifor Williams and Thomas Roberts, eds., Cywyddau Dafydd ap Gwilym a'i Gyfoeswyr (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1935). All future references to this text will be cited as DGG.

While elsewhere Iolo Goch adds that Rhys' brother Gronwy was "an amiable man:"

gŵr dianoff  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>.16, 26)<sup>1</sup>

Iolo likewise praises Owain Glyndŵr for social virtues, describing him as "pleasant and discreet" (digrifgall; IGE<sup>2</sup>. 31, 18); Gruffudd Llwyd recognizes the same quality in Glyndŵr, addressing him as a "most pleasant eagle:"

Eryr digrif afrifed  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>.122, 1)

Similar combinations meant to describe the ethos of the men they praised illustrate the convention: "humble of thought and speech" (ufudd bwyll a gofeg);<sup>2</sup> "gentle talisman" (tirion grair);<sup>3</sup> "perfect kindliness" (dinam ddaioni);<sup>4</sup> "venerable and gentle lord" (llwydner llednais);<sup>5</sup> "gentle leader" (lednais lyw).<sup>6</sup>

Thus it would appear that the appreciation of the more social and civic virtues had roots in a native tradition pre-dating the Age of Chivalry. That the references to these virtues increase in number during

<sup>1</sup>Henry Lewis, et al., eds., Cywyddau Iolo Goch ac Eraill, rev'd ed. (1937; rpt. Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1972). All references to this text will be cited as IGE<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup>Gruffudd Llwyd of Rhydderch; IGE<sup>2</sup>.114, 3.

<sup>3</sup>Gruffudd Llwyd of Owain Glyndŵr; IGE<sup>2</sup>.123, 26.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., IGE<sup>2</sup>.124, 13.

<sup>5</sup>Gruffudd Llwyd of David Nanmor; IGE<sup>2</sup>.126, 15.

<sup>6</sup>Iolo Goch of Syr Rhys ap Gruffudd; IGE<sup>2</sup>.11, 11.

the period of the Gogynfeirdd and in the chronicle entries from the twelfth century on may be merely due to the greater number of texts that have been preserved from that period. On the other hand, the native tradition may have been re-inforced by non-native panegyric modes which gained currency through such figures as Geoffrey of Monmouth whose sources, as Brynley Roberts has remarked, "represent an educated man's range of reading. Historians, classical, native, and contemporary, contributed to the work, as did the Bible, Latin classics, and contemporary romance."<sup>1</sup> The Brut y Tywysogion, effectively a continuation of Geoffrey's Historia, is marked by "set rhetorical passages in praise of princes and clerics" in which the medieval chroniclers, according to Thomas Jones, "like the contemporary bards, eulogized not so much individual persons and their deeds as the abstract virtues which were regarded as their natural endowment by virtue of their high station" (p. 22).<sup>2</sup>

Pity, the quality of compassion and mercy to those in his charge, is essential in the lord's role as justicier, but it also implied a committed battle against injustice, as seen in Gower's conception of the function of the knight. William Langland, too, understands that the knightly code of pite requires the punishing of wrong and the rewarding

<sup>1</sup>Brynley F. Roberts, ed., Brut Y Brenhinedd (Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1971), p. xv.

<sup>2</sup>"Historical Writing in Medieval Welsh," Scottish Studies, Vol. 12, pt.1 (1968), pp. 15-27. Professor Jones also recognized that the actual deeds of those eulogized did not always accord with the panegyric recitation of them. Here, then, we see the literary impulse toward fictionalized embellishment.



of virtue or right. It is specifically noted as one of five virtues possessed by Gawain, and is reflected by one of the points in his pentangle. It is one of the virtues of Chaucer's Knight who, in turn, in his tale, attributes it to Theseus. It is found in the Bruts in the formula "terrible to his foes but kind and merciful towards the poor and the weak," and has been taken by Thomas Jones to be little more than a literary cliché.<sup>1</sup> Thomas Parry has also observed that the formula "gentle to the gentle, harsh to the harsh" was a particular favorite of "the Poets of the Princes and the Nobility."<sup>2</sup>

Except for the reference in Canu Aneirin XLVI ("he was civil to the suppliant who approached him"),<sup>3</sup> the idealization of this virtue does not seem to have gained wide currency in the panegyric of the Heroic Age, though this is not to say that the Cynfeirdd did not appreciate the role of their lords as "defenders of the public weal."<sup>4</sup> The system of feudal relations no doubt greatly affected this concept. The suzerain at least technically had inviolable duties to his vassals, and his vast jurisdictional powers were comprised in the medieval concept of justicia<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Brut Y Tywysogyon, op. cit., p. 152.

<sup>2</sup>History, op. cit., p. 52.

<sup>3</sup>See page 33 above.

<sup>4</sup>Jarman makes this distinction between panegyric "in the manner of Taliesin" which so praises its heroes, in contrast to the praise accorded the heroes of The Gododdin whom he sees as praised for personal glory. "The Heroic Ideal," op. cit., p. 197.

<sup>5</sup>A full appreciation of the meaning and implications of this concept within its historical framework is outside the limits of this study. Certainly it involved considerably more than equitable judgment in the juridical sense, including administrative functions. A detailed review of its meaning can be found in Chapter 4 of F. L. Ganshof's Feudalism, trans. Philip Grierson (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1961) which includes an extensive bibliography.



Understandably, then, mercy and compassion would be regarded as crucial virtues to those under the feudal lord's authority. The advent of chivalry made the compassionate defense of the lower orders of society a point of honor, and, as we have noted, the romancers and poets seized on this quality as an indispensable virtue.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the quality of mercy describes a relationship between people of different social rank, whereas courtesy describes a relationship between equals. When a fourteenth-century poet points out that the subject of his panegyric is endowed with mercy or pity it may well be a mere mechanical attribution; or, it may be a deliberate attempt to establish his subject's eminence.

Both Iolo Goch and Gruffudd Llwyd make pointed, and in Iolo's case, elaborate, reference to Owain Glyndŵr's sense of justice and pity. As justicier, Glyndŵr inherits his right and applies his judgment prudently:

<sup>1</sup>Huizinga, following Hippolyte Taine, comments on the relationship between honor, pride, and the knight's devotion to justice, observing that pride rests largely on self-respect, and that the respect which he seeks leads him to pursue means and ends that will insure it. Thus: "Pride assuming the features of a high ethical value, knightly self-respect preparing the way for clemency and right [sic]. These transitions in the domain of thought are real. . . .the spirit of sacrifice, the desire for justice and protection for the oppressed - sprouted in the soil of chivalry." He illustrates the age's occupation with this concept by quoting a passage from the fourteenth-century French poet, Eustace Deschamps:

Tu as duŕe et durras sanz doubtaunce  
Tant com raisons sera de toy anée,  
Autrement, non; fay donc à la balance  
Justice en toy et que bien soit gardée.

"You have endured and will, no doubt, endure so long as reason will be loved by you. Not otherwise; so hold the balance of justice in yourself, and let it be well kept." Waning of the Middle Ages, p. 106.

Trefgarn o'i farn ef a fyn.  
 Gorthrech fydd gwrthrych ei farn,  
 Gwrthrychiad gorthir Acharn.  
 (IGE<sup>2</sup>.32, 32-34)

(Trans: He wants Trefgarn to be at his disposal. Oppression will be the object of his judgment, heir to the uplands of Acharn).

Gruffudd Llwyd similarly recognizes Glyndŵr's honorable authority:

Anneddf a cham ni oddef,  
 Ymysg ieirll ydd ymwaig ef.  
 (IGE<sup>2</sup>.127, 19-20)

(Trans: He does not tolerate lawlessness or wrongdoing among earls he joins in fellowship).

It is Iolo Goch who elaborates upon this quality in two poems he addresses to Glyndwr. In the first, Achau Owain Glyndŵr, Iolo appears to be drawing on the chivalric system of virtues as he describes Glyndwr's judicious treatment of the wicked and the weak, dealing harshly with the former, and gently with the latter.

Garw wrth arw, gŵr wrth eraill,  
 Mwyn fydd a llonydd i'r lleill,  
 Llonydd i wan, rhan ei raid,  
 Aflonydd i fileiniaid.  
 (IGE<sup>2</sup>.33, 9-12)

(Trans: Harsh to the harsh, manly in relation to others, he is gentle and pacific to others, unaggressive to the weak, a part of his necessity, and severe to villains).

Here the concept of gentillesse and pitie are explicitly detailed in the knight's role of protector of the helpless and punished of wrongdoers. Moreover, Iolo Goch sees Glyndŵr's compassionate regard for the weak as a necessity incumbent upon him.

In a charming vignette in I Owain Glyndŵr, Iolo perceives in Glyndŵr an unmistakably knightly gentility:

Ni ddug degan o'i anfodd  
 Gan fab, onid gan ei fodd.  
 Ni pheris drwy gis neu gur  
 Iddaw â'i ddwyllaw ddolur.  
 Ni chamodd fys na chymwyll  
 Cymain' â bw, cymen bwyll.

(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 34, 23-28)

(Trans: He never took away as much as a toy from a child against its will, unless with its consent; he never caused it suffering by a slap or a blow with his hands; he never shook his finger, or argued, with so much as a 'boo'; his discretion was perfect).

Bravery remained the dominant quality of the ideal hero, and the feudal warrior, like his historic predecessor, desired military glory above all else. It is difficult, therefore, to make sharp distinctions between the military hero of the Heroic Age, and the manner in which he was praised, and the military hero of the Chivalric Age. Ideas and forms characteristic of both frustrate any attempt to establish an antithesis, nor should we expect one to emerge within this area. Accordingly, even the particulars associated with bravery - steadfastness, fearlessness, indomitability, and rashness - appear as praiseworthy qualities in both heroic and chivalric panegyric. They have, in fact, a long ancestry in the West, attested in most heroic literatures.<sup>1</sup> In Wales the celebration

<sup>1</sup>We find it, of course, in Homer. In Anglo-Saxon society, too, the young reckless warrior represented the valorous ideal. The heroes of The Battle of Maldon are wigan unforhte ("unafraid warriors"; 79b) and uneargemen ("fearless men"; 206a), No. XXII in Bright's Anglo-Saxon Reader, rev'd ed. by James Hulbert (New York: Holt & Co., 1948). The Old English literary expression of this quality is well reviewed by G. N. Garmonsway, "Anglo-Saxon Heroic Attitudes," in Medieval and Linguistic Studies in Honor of F. Magoun, Jr., J. B. Bessinger, Jr., and Robert Creed, eds. (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1965).

of the warrior virtues continued in an unbroken tradition from the Cynfeirdd to the cywyddwyr, traceable through the Armes Prydein, the Bruts, and the panegyric of the Gogynfeirdd for whom drud is a favorite descriptive adjective.<sup>1</sup>

Both Iolo Goch and Gruffudd Llwyd provide adequate testimony of the panegyric virtue of prowess and the audacia through which it often found expression. Both relate Owain Glyndŵr's exploits in the Scottish campaign of 1385, and both portray Glyndŵr's excessive fury, which we would tend to see as bordering on rashness, as he fights with a mere fragment of his spear.

A'r ail grwydr a fu brwydr brid,  
A dryll y gwayw o drallid.  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 35, 19-20)

(Trans: And the second wandering [i.e., expedition] was to a costly battle, with a spear shattered in excessive fury).

Gruffudd Llwyd's I Owain Glyndŵr almost certainly refers to the same incident, though Gruffudd expands his hyperbolic description.

Drylliaist, duliaist ar dalwrn,  
Dy ddart hyd ymron dy ddwrn.  
O nerth ac arial calon,  
A braich ac ysgwydd a bron,  
Peraist fy naf o'th lafur  
Pyst mellt rhwng y dellt a'r dur.  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 123, 31-36)

<sup>1</sup>It will be recalled that the compilers of the Gramadegau'r Penceirddiaid itemized bravery (dewredd) and strength (milwriaeth) among the virtues of a lord deserving praise. G. J. Williams, op. cit., "Pum Llyfr Kerddwriaeth," p. 132, line 34.

(Trans: You shattered your javelin almost up to your fist, you dashed it on the battle-field. By strength and a courageous heart, by arm and shoulder and breast, you caused, my lord, by your toil, rays of lightning between the lances and the steel).

Elsewhere in the work of the cywyddwyr, tribute is paid to this quality. Thus the anonymous poet of Moliant I Hywel Coetmor O Nanconwy says of Hywel, "He was fearless:"

eofn oedd  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 107, 12)

Iolo Goch praises the four sons of Tudur Fychan as "barons without fear:"

barwniaid heb arynaig  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 16, 1)

And Gruffudd ap Maredudd, in an exhortation to battle, addresses Owain ap Tomas ap Rhodri: "You are without fear:"

wyt diarswyt  
(RBP 1313.11)

While the attributes discussed above formed the nucleus of the commendable virtues, physical beauty was considered a trait meriting the praise of the panegyrist. It is numbered among the praiseworthy traits in the Gramadegau'r Penceirddiaid,<sup>1</sup> it was recognized by Aneirin as a laudable quality,<sup>2</sup> and, as we have seen, it appears in the Triads and

<sup>1</sup>Tegwch pryt, a thelediwrwyd corff ("beauty of form and grace of body") in Llyfr Coch Hergest in G. J. Williams, op. cit., p. 16, lines 4-5.

<sup>2</sup>See Jackson's A.1, A.46, A.57, and B.41 (corresponding to CA. I, 4; CA. XLIX, 556; CA. XXXVII. CA. 409, and CA. CIII. 1257).

in the set rhetorical passages of the Bruts. The Rhetorica ad Herennium (III, vi.10) itemizes agility, strength, beauty, and health as physical attributes to be given consideration in the epideictic. And, as E. R. Curtius has put it, "no literary genre has greater need for beautiful heroes and heroines than the romance."<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, Macsen Wledig is introduced in the opening lines of Breudwyt Maxen Wledic:

Maxen Wledic a oed amhera6dyr yn  
ruvein a theccaf g6r oed a doethaf  
a goreu a wedei yn amhera6dyr  
or auu kyn noc ef.<sup>2</sup>

(Trans: Macsen Wledig was emperor of Rome, and he was the handsomest and wisest of men, and the best suited to be emperor of the ones who went before him).

The Gogynfeirdd incorporate references to beauty in their panegyric. Bleddyn Fardd describes Owein Goch as "comely and fair Owein" (hart ywein uirein; H, 65, 29); Gwalchmei eulogizes Owein Gwynedd as "the fairest of the kings of Britain" (techaf o deyrnet prydein; H, 14, 21); Llygad Gŵr remembers Llywelyn ap Gruffudd as "comely and proud, with a notched blade [*i. e.*, sword] decorated in gold" (teleid balch a bylchlafyn eurweith; H, 218, 16).

The cywyddwyr follow suit. In his Marwnad Syr Rhys, Iolo Goch compares Rhys with Uthr Pendragon of the romances: Uthr Bendragon lon lendyd ("Uther Pendragon of bright beauty;" IGE<sup>2</sup>. 10, 29), and states

<sup>1</sup>Curtius, European Literature, op. cit., p. 181.

<sup>2</sup>J. Gwenogvryn Evans, ed., Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch (1907; rpt. Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1973), col. 178, ll. 34-38.

flatly of the sons of Tudur ap Gronwy, "they were comely" (hardd oeddynt; IGE<sup>2</sup>, 19, 9). To the anonymous author of I Owain [ap Tomas ap Rhodri], Owain is "a man of beauty" (gwr o lendid; IGE<sup>2</sup>, 91, 16). Gruffudd Llwyd puts more elaborate stress on the beauty of Rhydderch:

Gwn na wnaeth. . . .  
 Paentiwr . . . .  
 Llun gwr, a'i roi'n llawn o ged,  
 Na delw cyn brydoled.  
 (IGE<sup>2</sup>, 113, 21-24)

(Trans: I know that no artist ever made a picture or a painting of a man, handing out bountiful gifts, so handsome).

In this poem Gruffudd Llwyd introduces a number of the traits that we have been discussing. We might look more closely at this cywydd as well as a few other composite portraits in order to appreciate the systematic incorporation of the qualities of the ideal hero in medieval panegyric. First, Gruffudd Llwyd's Marwnad Rhydderch which nicely exemplifies the panegyric mode of the cywyddwyr. It draws on the Triads, using Adam as a paragon, introduces non-native, romance references comparing Rhydderch's attributes with those of the Seven Sages of Rome,<sup>1</sup> and comprehensively details the virtues of the warrior and leader.

Trywyr gynt o'r helynt hawl  
 O'i bryd a fu briodawl;  
 Tri o'i ddoethder, brywder braw,  
 Tri o'i nerth, trewyn' wrthaw.  
 I'n oes, ni bu yn oes neb,  
 E' ddoeth un o'i ddoethineb,  
 Ac o'i nerth, ef fu'n gwiw nawdd,  
 Ac o'i bryd, gwae a brydawdd!  
 Campau Addaf gwplaf gynt,  
 Ar Rydderch oll yr oeddynt.  
 (IGE<sup>2</sup>, 113, 9-18)

<sup>1</sup>Saith ddoctor. . . / A rifwyd gynt i Rufain; / Wythfed. . . / Fu Rydderch. . . . ("Seven doctors were formerly honored in Rome; the eighth was Rhydderch. . . ." IGE<sup>2</sup>, 114, 5-8).

(Trans: Three men formerly in the course of right possessed his [i.e., Adam's] beauty; three his wisdom, powerful amazement, three his strength, they were befitting to him. In our time, there has not come anyone of his discretion or of his strength, (he was our fine refuge), or of his beauty - woe to the singer! The qualities perfected in Adam formerly were all in Rhydderch).

The conclusion of his marwnad further catalogues Rhydderch's appreciable virtues, here fusing traditional native epithets typical of the war-like hero with praise of Rhydderch's more courtly and social virtues. The portrait stands as a mirror to princes, and in this it resembles Chaucer's portrait of his Knight, and the Gawain-poet's of Gawain.

Wythrym dadl, ieithrym didwyll,  
 Athro i bawb, uthr ei bwyll:  
 Capten mad, ceimiad cymen,  
 Cyfraith drwy bob iaith o'i ben;  
 Cynddelw lwyth, cawn dda o'i law,  
 Caf o'i ôl cof i wylaw:  
 Cynnwr trin, porthwin a'n parth,  
 Cannwyll disbwyll a dosbarth;  
 Cwmpas swydd fas y sydd fau,  
 Compod y gerdd a'r campau,  
 Capelau saint, cwplau serch,  
 Cwplaf er Addaf Rhydderch.

(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 115, 1-12)

(Trans: Of eightfold strength in battle, authoritative in speech, guileless, a teacher to all, formidable in mind; a good captain, an accomplished champion; there was justice in every language from his mouth; a model for the race; I used to get good from his hand, I shall get memories which are cause for weeping after him; leader in battle, provider of wine for us, candle of wisdom and reason; the compass of a



base function is mine, the pair of compasses of song and of accomplishments, the chapels of saints, the celebration of love, I celebrate Rhydderch for the sake of Adam.)

Indeed, Gruffudd Llwyd's portrait of Rhydderch so comprehensively reviews the qualities of the ideal hero that it could stand beside didactic tracts which were meant to elucidate the standards to which nobles and princes should aspire.<sup>1</sup> What greater praise though, than to present your subject, as Gruffudd Llwyd does Rhydderch, as a "model for the race?"

Chaucer's Knight likewise represents the well-bred, gentil knight, who is indomitable, perfect in courtesy and pity, and who matches fortitude with wisdom.

A Knyght ther was, and that a worthy man,  
That fro the tyme that he first began  
To riden out, he loved chivalrie,  
Trouthe and honour,<sup>2</sup> freȝom and curtoisie,  
Ful worthy<sup>3</sup> was he in his lordes were. . . .  
(General Prologue, ll. 43-47)<sup>4</sup>

And foughten . . .  
In lystes thries, and ay slayn his foo  
(ll. 62-63)

And evermoore he hadde a sovereyn prys;  
And though that he were worthy, he was wys.  
(ll. 67-68)

He nevere yet no vileynye ne sayde  
In al his lyf unto no maner wight.  
He was a verray, parfit gentil knight.  
(ll. 70-72)

<sup>1</sup>Gervase Mathew in his "Ideals of Knighthood," op. cit., refers to such texts as Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, the Chandos Herald's Life of the Black Prince, Sir Amadas, and William of Palerne (written for the De Bohun household) as didactic romances. Whether or not we agree on their didactic purpose, there can be no doubt that they portray the ideals of knighthood.

<sup>2</sup>honor: i. e., in the sense of honorable dealing.

<sup>3</sup>worthy: prudent.

<sup>4</sup>F. N. Robinson, ed., The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, 2nd. ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957).

And foughten. . . .

Though it is unlikely that Chaucer's Knight represents one individual historical figure, scholars have thought him to be a composite of actual men.<sup>1</sup> In any case, he had literary counterparts, and it may not be without value to place him beside his Welsh peers, for Welsh poetry is at once literary and therefore at least semi-fictionalized, though addressed to and based on historic figures.

Both Iolo Goch and Gruffudd Llwyd certainly appreciated both the value and availability of romance allusions and their ready applicability to panegyric. Iolo Goch claims of Syr Hywel y Fwyall that "he will be loved by the gentle Einiort."

Annwyl fydd gan Wyl Einiort.<sup>2</sup>  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 27, 5)

So strong is the romance impulse in Gruffudd Llwyd's I Owain Glyndŵr that the poem takes on the dimensions of romance itself as he provides a sixteen-line account of Owain's adventures with the Black Knight in Iarlles y Ffynnon.

Gruffudd ap Maredudd's purpose in Llacheu Gwyned is expressed:

"Let us fashion praise, then, of your feats of arms."

Gwnawn glot ynteu o'th draws gampeu<sup>3</sup>  
(RBP 1219.21-22)

<sup>1</sup>Robinson's notes afford a brief survey of the scholarship on this point, p. 652.

<sup>2</sup>Gwyn Williams translates this line, "He will be loved by the gentle romancer," taking Einiort to be a reference to Eilhart. The Burning Tree (London: Faber & Faber, 1965), p. 115.

<sup>3</sup>The Poetry in the Red Book of Hergest, transcribed and edited by J. Gwenogvryn Evans (Llanbedrog, 1909).

thus bringing us to a discussion of chivalric accomplishments.

Coincidental with these accomplishments is the portrayal of the quality of knighthood through the description of its trappings, its bright colors and fine materials, often exotic and often paralleled in literary sources. Concomitant with such descriptions is the use of heraldry in depicting the grandeur, and haughteur, of one's lord. The range of the descriptions grouped under the heading "heraldic" varies from descriptive details suggestive of the system (in which case it is difficult to determine whether the stimulus behind it was formal blazonry or features drawn from the romance) to a sometimes formally appropriate and technically accurate account of the knight's arms, though these portraits do not provide a complete blazoning of the arms.

Before examining the textual evidence in the Welsh poems, it is perhaps advisable to review certain aspects of the system that will help elucidate the following discussion. First, it might be noted that the concept of knighthood comprises a three-fold system: 1) a mode of feudal tenure, with which we will not be concerned; 2) a personal attribute or dignity, which will be discussed in the following pages; 3) a scheme of manners or social arrangements, some of which have been surveyed in the preceding pages, while others will be considered now.

The Grades of Knighthood, established by our period, had the king at their head. Under the king were the constable and the marshals; these comprised the chiefs in military command, remembering, of course, that war and the arts of war were the stimulants of the system.

Attendant on them were the heralds<sup>1</sup> who functioned also as officers of the military court. Their duties included the carrying of messages, orders and challenges, the calling of truces, and the identification of the numbers of the dead and wounded.

Basic to entry into knighthood was birth, though English practice, even in the Middle Ages, differed from continental custom in that men of low birth could be knighted if distinguished by service to the Crown. Gruffudd Llwyd in a cywydd to Owain Glyndŵr laments the scarcity of Welshmen elevated to the ranks of knighthood (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 126,11 ff) protesting that only Dafydd Hanmer and Syr Hywel y Fwyall were so honored. In a poem by Llywelyn ap y Moel to Meredudd ab Ifan (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 202) we are given to believe that Meredudd attained the Order of the Garter, however unlikely this may seem. Yet there is every reason to believe that at least a few Welsh poets saw certain of their lords and/or patrons as invested knights, though in some instances depictions of a lord as such may be taken to be hyperbolic references only, as will be seen in the following pages.

<sup>1</sup>Iolo Goch in his Mawl I Syr Rosier Mortimer (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 47, 5-6), a poem remarkably full of heraldic usage, as we shall see, calls himself a herald: mi sy herod ("I am a herald"). An interesting historical grouping placed heralds and minstrels together, for, as Denholm-Young has noted, throughout the time of Edward I and certainly into the fourteenth century the two occupations were not clearly distinguished, at least in England. He adds that "it is safe to say that the more successful Edwardian minstrels had a knowledge of heraldry" (p. 57), and that not until the early fourteenth century were they separate professions. N. Denholm-Young, History and Heraldry: 1254 to 1310 (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1965), pp. 54-60.

Knightly ranks distinguished between the knights banneret and the knights bachelor. Both were equally knights but the banneret was more distinguished, though we need not concern ourselves further with precise distinctions. Likewise, there was a distinction between squire and page. Both were in training for knighthood, both had special duties accorded them, but the squire was more advanced. Ordinarily, page and squire advanced through stages to knighthood, almost every feudal court and castle being a sort of school of chivalry. They learned the social amenities, martial skills, hunting and hawking, how to carve and serve. Chaucer's portrait of the Squire from the General Prologue clarifies the contemporary conception of the squire, and may, like the portrait of his knightly father cited earlier, provide a frame of reference from which we can draw in our further analyses.

With hym ther was his sone, a yong SQUIER. . . .  
 Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.  
 Of his stature he was of evene lengthe,  
 And wonderly delyvere, and of greet strengthe.  
 And he hadde been somtyme in chyvachie<sup>1</sup>  
 In Flaundres, in Artoys, and Pycardie. . . .  
 He was as fressh as is the month of May.  
 Short was his gowne, with sleeves longe and wyde.  
 Wel koude he sitte on hors and faire ryde. . . .  
 Curteis he was, lowely, and servysable,  
 And carf biforn his fader at the table.  
 (ll. 79, 82-86, 92-96, 99-100).

<sup>1</sup>chyvachie: cavalry expedition.

When the squire completed his training and entered the service of some lord, he became an "armiger"<sup>1</sup> or "scutifer," for he bore the shield and armor of his lord to the field and there encased him in it. After bearing himself well for six to eight years he became a knight, though it should be noted that in medieval practice it did not always work out as neatly as that.

Owain Glyndŵr was certainly a squire, though he may not have been accorded knighthood. He is described as an "armiger" in Ann. Hen. IV and Vita Ric. II, while Walshingham refers to him as "scutiger." But, as Stubbs has pointed out (Constitutional History, ii (2nd ed.), 544-46, the distinction between squire and knight was not always clear at this period. Lloyd in his book on Glyndŵr notes, quite correctly, that Glyndŵr was a baron by tenure<sup>2</sup>. It is as such that Iolo Goch describes him (IGE<sup>2</sup>.XI) in a poem which we will have much to remark on in the course of this study. But we might remark here that Glyndŵr's testimony at the Scrope-Grosvenor trial in 1386 (a trial at which, incidentally, Chaucer was present and gave evidence) certainly indicates his acquaintance with heraldic bearings and places him in the society of squires, knights and the well-born generally.

Part of the trappings we alluded to earlier consisted of the standards borne in battle to mark the divisions of the host. The Welsh

<sup>1</sup>Armiger, as Professor Jackson has helpfully advised me, is also used in the sense of "armigerous person," i.e., one who bears a family coat of arms.

<sup>2</sup>J. E. Lloyd, Owen Glendower (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1931), p. 26.

poets we are considering were acquainted with these devices and made reference to them. Though the main divisions of the army were arranged under the king's standard and other principal standards, smaller divisions were collected under the banners of the greater nobility or knights banneret, while still smaller groups gathered under the pennons of the knights bachelors. The banner always implied a more or less extensive command, though every knight was entitled to bear a pennon, and every squire a pencil (or pennoncel). These flags and banners were emblazoned with the arms, or some part of the arms, of their owners.

Among the Welsh poetic references to standards, banners and pennons (including the lesser pennoncel of the squires), the most detailed is provided by Iolo Goch in I Syr Hywel y Fwyall:

Ac ystondardd hardd hirddu  
Yn nhâl tŵr, da filwr fu,  
A thri blodeuyn gwyn gwiw,  
O'r unllun, dail arianlliw.  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 25, 21-24)

(Trans: And a fair long black standard in front of the tower, a good soldier he was, with three fine white flowers of the same form, with leaves of silver hue).

Since Iolo describes the flag as hir (long), we cannot be certain that it was a banner, banners being rather square, though it is entirely possible. But, we would not expect Syr Hywel to be a knight banneret, and as a knight bachelor his standard would be a pennon. Nonetheless, Iolo tells us the arms were three white flowers on a black field. He repeats Syr Hywel's arms again and this time stresses his heraldic terminology:



Tri fflŵr-de-lis, orris erw,  
Yn y sabl, nid ansyberw.  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 26, 21-22)

(Trans: Three fleur-de-lis, iris on a sable field, they are not uncourtly).

We might note that Iolo provides the English equivalent orris (iris) for the French flower, using also the English heraldic description of black, sabl. Other references to the fleur-de-lis by Welsh poets are very probably encomiastic ascriptions; e. g., Dafydd ap Gwilym in his Marwnad Llywelyn ap Gwilym (GDG 13): coeth edling, fflower dling dy lis ("excellent noble, fleur-de-lis;" line 117); Rhys Goch similarly terms Gruffudd Llwyd a fflŵr d'lis (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 159, 12). But even if such usage is to be taken as descriptive and hyperbolic rather than technically heraldic, I should think that here at least we are dealing with outside influences on the vocabulary and frame of reference of medieval Welsh bards..

Iolo Goch's reference to the items buried with Syr Rhys (in Marwnad Syr Rhys) is almost certainly a reference to actual knightly gear:

Nêr, a'i faner i fyny,  
A'i arwyl a'i hwyl hyloyw,  
A'i guras a'i helm las loyw,  
A'i seirch yn gyfryw â sŷr . . . .  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 11, 22-25)

(Trans: A lord, with his banner on high, and his ?funeral rites<sup>1</sup>, and his bold bright disposition, and his cuirass, and his bright grey helmet, and his armor like stars. . . .)

<sup>1</sup>  
Perhaps "cloak."



Gruffudd Llwyd, who is much given to courtly and chivalric descriptions in his verse, provides a generalized reference to the standard of Owain Amrhedudd [sic.]

Addwyn o bensel melyn. . . .  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 129, 29)

(Trans: A fair yellow pennoncel).

And again:

Ni bu ymlaen llu Lleon  
Ystondardd mor hardd â hon.  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 129, 31-32)

(Trans: There was not before the host of Chester a standard so beautiful as this).

Though the description of the pennoncel is not detailed, the association is explicitly knightly and martial. As was stated earlier, knights and squires bore their standards in battle, and thus the reference in ll. 31-32 reflects actual practice.

Gruffudd ap Maredudd in his awdl to Gronwy Fychan obviously associates a banner with nobility:

eurlli6 y vaner o ieirll voned  
(RBP 1231.12)

(Trans: His banner of earls of noble race was golden-hued).

The ceremony conferring knighthood receives poetic description in Llywelyn ap y Moel's I Feredudd ab Ifan, Ystum Cegydd (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 200) which suggests that Meredudd had been invested with the Order of the Garter. The indication given by the following lines is that Meredudd had in fact passed from the rank of a squire to that of a knight, but the description of the ceremony certainly suggests conferral of a very high honor indeed.

A gardas amlwg eurdeg  
 Ar lawnt aur ar ei llin'teg.  
 Erllynedd mawredd mirain  
 Obry'n y cwrt, barwn cain,  
 Harri, goel iêirll hir ei gledd,  
 Bumed, ac ni bu omedd,  
 A roes iraidd res arian  
 Ar ei war glew, eryr glân.  
 Rhoed eto ar llwyddo'r lles  
 Aur fynwair ar ei fynwes.  
 (IGE<sup>2</sup>.202, 9-18)

(Trans: And the conspicuous Garter golden and fair on golden lawn at his fair knee. Last year in noble majesty, below in the court, Henry V, excellent baron, the troth of earls - long in his sword - put a fresh stripe of silver round his bold neck, the brilliant eagle; and it was not refused. He was given also, to prosper the benefit, a collar of gold on his breast).

The Order of the Garter was established by Edward III sometime around 1348, and traditionally consisted of twenty-five knights until late in the eighteenth century. These lines clearly assign the Garter to Meredudd. In addition to the description of the arms conferred, the reference to the pomp and the ceremony itself is of some interest, though it is curious that he does not mention the accolade (i. e., the embrace which is followed by a blow with the hand). If Meredudd was a member of the Order of the Garter, this poem stands in nice contrast to the protest by Gruffudd Llwyd (I Owain Glyndŵr; IGE<sup>2</sup>. 125) on the dearth of knighted Welshmen.

All knights were entitled to golden spurs, spurs being the symbolic mark of knighthood (along with the sword they are central in the knight-ing ceremony). Formally, knights were equites aurati, their golden spurs

distinguishing them from the silver-spurred squires. These golden spurs in turn became their peculiar badge in popular estimation and proverbial speech. Iolo Goch and Gruffudd Llwyd reserve their depiction of golden spurs to their portraits of Roger Mortimer and Owain Glyndŵr, both men the most historically likely to have been so honored. Iolo Goch, exhorting Roger Mortimer to prove himself in Ireland, pointedly urges him:

A rho eto aur otoyw.  
(IGE<sup>2</sup> .47, 36)

(Trans: And put on again the golden spur[s]).

Gruffudd Llwyd's two poems to Owain Glyndŵr are, as we noted earlier, marked by a strong romance impulse. In the second of the two he speaks of the honors of Syr Hywel y Fwyall, who was knighted for his feats in the battle of Poitiers (1356), and compares him with Otiel, one of the heroes in the Charlemagne romances, who was praiseworthy in four ways: excellence of form, strength in arms, lineage, and wisdom.<sup>1</sup> Gruffudd Llwyd provides further testimony on Syr Hywel's status by depicting him in "his golden spur[s]":

aur ei otoyw  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 126, 20)

<sup>1</sup>See the notes to this poem, especially to ll. 19 and 20, on page 358, IGE<sup>2</sup>.

The most important accessory of the arms is the crested helmet.<sup>1</sup>

The helmet included a torse or wreath of twisted silk which was well established in English use by the early fifteenth century, though very possibly earlier. In addition, the helmet could be ornamented by a mantle or hanging cloth, of silk or sendal, which was attached to the top of the helmet, below the crest, and would stream out like a pennant as the rider bent his head and charged. Both Iolo Goch and Gruffudd Llwyd include descriptions of, or allusions to, the crests and wreaths in their panegyric verse. Iolo Goch, for instance, describes Tudur Fychan as he appears in jousting combat:

Helm gribawg ruddfoawg fyth  
A habrsiwn. . . . (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 14, 3-4)

(Trans: with a crested rich helmet always, and a habergeon).

Here the quality of knighthood, expressed in its arms and its war-like sports, becomes the vehicle of Iolo's panegyric.

There is further evidence in Iolo Goch's work that he was working within the framework of the chivalric tradition. In his Marwnad Syr Rys, which we referred to earlier as providing examples of the catalogue of knightly trappings which became vehicles of praise in medieval panegyric, Iolo refers to Rhys' crested helmet:

A'i eurgrest uwch helm eurgref.  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 11, 10)

<sup>1</sup>The crest was a figure of some sort - a heraldic beast or symbol - which stood up on top of the helmet. In the Middle Ages the horse, too, was ordinarily crested.

(Trans: And his golden crest high above a sturdy gold helmet).

Part of the splendor of chivalry was reflected in the tournament. And though the Church was unmistakably hostile to tournaments, to the extent of prohibiting them, and though moralists, humanists, and the burgher class disapproved of them, the medieval nobility pursued tournaments and jousts which they surrounded with ceremony and pomp. The tournaments themselves were saturated with the staging of romance, the knights often masquerading as romance figures.<sup>1</sup>

Iolo Goch and Gruffudd Llwyd distinctly drew on knightly trappings and knightly accomplishments in their panegyric portraits. The courtly, knightly world is evoked in Iolo Goch's I Owain Glyndŵr.

Goreugwr fu, garw agwrdd,  
Ni wnaeth ond marchogaeth meirch,  
Gorau amser, mewn gwrmseirch;  
Dwyn paladr, gwaladr gwiwlew,  
soced dur<sup>2</sup> siaced dew;  
Arwain rhest a phenffestín,  
A helm wen, - gŵr hael am win -  
Ac yn ei phen, nen iawnraifft,  
Adain rudd o edn yr Aifft.

(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 35, 2-10)

(Trans: He was the best of men, harsh and mighty, he did nothing but ride horses, the best time, in dark blue armor; bearing a lance, the prince and worthy hero, with a steel socket, and a thick jacket; with a spear-rest and a mail cap and a white helmet - man generous with

<sup>1</sup>See Chapter V in Huizinga, op. cit., and Gerard Brault's Speculum review of Denholm-Young's History and Heraldry, op. cit., p. 320.

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wine - and on his head, just and merciful chief, a scarlet plume of the Egyptian bird).

These lines unmistakably establish the frame of reference within which Iolo Goch praised his hero: chivalric and non-native. The composite neglects virtually nothing of basic importance to the knightly portrait: Glyndŵr is pre-eminent, expert in horsemanship, equipped with knightly accoutrements which provide Iolo an opportunity to introduce the exotic reference to the bird of Arabia. Just such an exotic reference as we would expect to find in the romance descriptions.

Gruffudd Llwyd provides a fairly extensive description of Glyndwr's apparel both in and out of tournament, also adding references to both the more exotic trappings and the social arrangements which place Glyndwr at the head of the high table.

Gwisgo wrls ac ysgarlad  
 A harnais aur goreuryw,  
 A gra mân, barwn grym yw  
 Os iach a rhydd fydd ef  
 Ef a ennill, pan fynno,  
 Esgidiau, gwindasau gwaig,  
 Cordwalfrith, carw diwylfraig,  
 Yn ymwan ar dwrneimant  
 Yn briwio cyrff, yn bwrw cant;  
 Eistedd a gaiff ar osteg  
 Ar y bwrdd tâl, byrddaid teg;  
 Anneddf a cham ni oddef,  
 Ymysg ieirll ydd ymwaig ef.  
 (IGE<sup>2</sup>.127, 8-20)

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nen iawnraifft (1.9) - nen, of course, means heaven, vault, roof, or sky, and, by extension, chief. If we take iawn to mean just (or even true), and -raifft to be graifft: merciful (see Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru, Rhan XXIV, p. 1523), we can translate the line as above. It should be noted that the IGE editors enter iawn-graifft in their glossary but do not supply a definition.

(Trans: Wearing a border of scarlet and harness of best gilt gold, and fur pieces; grim baron he is. If it be that he is hale and liberal, he wins, when he may wish, shoes, bright buskins, of speckled cordovan leather, fearless strong stag, jousting in tournament, smashing bodies, striking a hundred; he sits in public<sup>1</sup> at the head of the high table, fair boarding; he does not suffer lawlessness or wrong, among earls he joins in fellowship).

Gruffudd Llwyd here uses the complex of features representative of the knightly ideal. He observes that Glyndŵr is a baron - and we have noted elsewhere that rank and mode of feudal tenure is one of the hallmarks of the knightly system. Glyndŵr's personal attributes are recognized: he is fearless, strong, grim in combat; he fulfills the role of the justicier, safeguarding law and right; the knightly scheme of manners or social arrangements are reflected by his honored position at the high table and his expert participation in tournament and joust. Romantic exaggeration portrays him as overcoming a hundred. And while Glyndŵr might well have actually worn a scarlet border, fur pieces and shoes of cordovan (speckled leather), such items appear with amazing regularity in the romances. Indeed, so regularly did shoes of cordovan figure in medieval romances that Chaucer's archly drawn Sir Thopas wears them. And, in fact, both the Welsh chwedlau and romances supply evidence that suggests the association of buskins and cordovan leather (either speckled or new) was a literary formula.

<sup>1</sup> Or, more likely: "when silence is proclaimed."

Breudwyt Ronabwy,<sup>1</sup> for instance, describes one of the squires as wearing: a dwy esgit o gordwal brith. In Owein,<sup>2</sup> Cai meets two lads similarly shod: a dwy wintas o gordwal newyd; likewise the youths in Breudwyt Maxen Wledic:<sup>3</sup> Gwintasseu o gordwal newyd. Gereint<sup>4</sup> appears in the chwedl devoted to his adventures: a dwy eskid issel o gordwal.

Glyndŵr's seat at the high table finds a parallel in Chaucer's honored placement of his Knight: Ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne,<sup>5</sup> which Chaucer uses to distinguish the Knight's rank from his son's, the Squire. The Gawain-poet, too, is careful to assign such a position of honor to Gawain who sits at the high table, with distinction, beside Guenever.<sup>6</sup> Iolo Goch, in another poem, attests the honor of being seated at the high table, praising the mannerly arrangements of the court of Ieuan, bishop of Llanelwy.

Peri fy rhoddi ar radd  
Iawn a wnâi yn y neuadd,  
I eistedd fry ar osteg  
Ar y ford dâl, arfer teg.  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 83, 15-18)

(Trans: I am caused to be placed correctly in the hall, to sit, when silence is proclaimed, fine custom, at the high table).

<sup>1</sup>Breudwyt Ronabwy, Melville Richards, ed. (Caerdydd; 1948), p. 14, ll. 3-4.

<sup>2</sup>Owein: Chwedyl Iarlles y Ffynmawn, R. L. Thomson, ed. (DIAS, 1968), p. 2, l. 43.

<sup>3</sup>Breudwyt Maxen Wledic in Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch, J. Gwenogvryn Evans, ed., reprinted by the University of Wales (Caerdydd; 1973), p. 91; col. 181. 11-12.

<sup>4</sup>Chwedyl Gereint vab Erbin, *ibid.*, p. 195, col. 389. 9-10.

<sup>5</sup>General Prologue, l. 52.

<sup>6</sup>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, ll. 109-111.



On the whole, then, the salient features in Gruffudd Llwyd's description of Glyndŵr reflect the quality of knighthood conveyed by literary sources.

The tournament, which was a chivalric occasion par excellence, affords Iolo Goch a means through which to praise both Roger Mortimer in Mawl I Syr Rosier Mortimer, a poem to be discussed at some length later, and Tudur Fychan and his sons. Tudur Fychan is called marchog midlan mad ("knight of a seemly tournament:" IGE<sup>2</sup>. 12, 12) early in the panegyric, while later the allusion is developed:

Gnodach iddaw wisgaw'n waisg  
Yn ymwanfrwydr, iôn mwynfraig,  
Helm gribawg ruddfoawg fyth  
A habrsiwn, walch ewybrsyth,  
A llurig rwymedig radd  
Dromlaes i fedru ymladd.  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 14, 1-6)

(Trans: He was more accustomed, the gentle, sturdy lord, to arming himself for a jousting match in a crested rich helmet always and a habergeon - the swift, straight hawk - and a strapped-on mail-coat of great worth, heavy and flexible for ability in fight.)

Tudur Fychan is wearing a habrsiwn, or coat of mail, probably chain-mail as the use of llaes suggests. This is another indisputable import, and probably a late one. Lloyd-Jones' citations<sup>1</sup> give Dafydd ap Gwilym's use as the earliest example of the word, but Dafydd's is a metaphorical one and is not directly relevant here.<sup>2</sup> Chaucer depicts his Knight in the General Prologue as wearing a habergeon (line 76),

<sup>1</sup>J. Lloyd-Jones, Geirfa Barddoniaeth Gynnar Gymraeg, Cyfrol II (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1950-1963), p. 757.

<sup>2</sup>Thomas Parry, ed. Gwaith Dafydd ap Gwilym, 2nd ed. (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1963), No. 68, l. 46.

and the Green Knight twice stresses that he owns a hauberghe (line 203; and, hawbergh; line 268) as he attempts to indicate his knightly and martial status. These, of course, are not exhaustive references, but they indicate fourteenth-century usage.

The religious overtones with which the concept of knighthood was imbued are reflected in Syr Rys' bearing the image of Saint George. Though it is not stated, the image would have been borne on the inner surface of the shield, similar to the image of the Virgin borne by Arthur and Gawain on the interior of their shields.<sup>1</sup>

The symbolic significance of a man's arms was not lost on Iolo Goch. We have seen that he blazoned Syr Hywel y Fwyall's arms with three fleur-de-lis in a field sable. In his long poem to Syr Rosier Mortimer, a poem we have referred to earlier and reserved for detailed consideration here, Iolo Goch singles out the escutcheon for a rhetorical question of significance to us,<sup>2</sup> and one which leads him into extensive treatment of Mortimer's arms. Because this poem is so noteworthy in its elaborate reflection of the chivalric system of virtues, in its heraldic usage, and in its political-historical aspects we have decided to treat it in

<sup>1</sup>On the practice of bearing the image of the Virgin on the interior surface of the shield, see the notes to line 649, page 92 in Tolkien and Gordon's edition of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, (1925; rpt. Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1960), and to Norman Davis' rev'd ed. of the Tolkien and Gordon text, op. cit., p. 95.

<sup>2</sup>The question, Pa ryw ystyr, pâr osteg, / Y rhoed yr arfau tau teg? (p. 47, ll. 7-8), itself is a rhetorical device, rationatio, which the speaker characteristically asks himself in order to lead him into an answer. This type of rhetorical question is to be distinguished from interrogatio, where no answer is expected. Rhetoric, as it appears in the work of the Welsh bards of the period, is discussed in Chapter III.

some detail, despite its length.<sup>1</sup> First, let us briefly review the background of Mortimer as supplied both by Henry Lewis, the editors' notes to ICE, Eurys Rowlands, and what is known generally of Mortimer's history in so far as it need concern us.

The Mortimers of Wigmore, earls of March and Ulster, were of a stock related to the dukes of Normandy as well as to several great families of the duchy. One of our Sir Roger's claims to Welsh princely honor (as Iolo Goch saw it) was based on his descent from Gwladus Ddu, daughter of Llywelyn the Great. Sir Roger's father was Edmund, 3rd earl of March (1351-1381), who married into the royal house. His wife was Philippa, daughter of Lionel, duke of Clarence, and Elizabeth de Burgh, the heir of Ulster. This alliance brought Ulster's earldom to his honors and, further, brought him into the direct succession to the Crown. Sir Roger himself married Eleanor Holland, King Richard's niece, and in the parliament of 1385, Richard (II) named Roger Mortimer heir presumptive. Sir Roger was killed in a skirmish at Kells in 1398.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Aside from J. Lloyd-Jones' discussion of the historical aspects of the poem in BBCS, vol. xi, pp. 114-18, where he considers the Irish problems reflected in the poem, the only other signal treatment of the poem is that given by E. I. Rowlands in the festschrift to Angus Matheson (Celtic Studies, James Carney and David Greene, eds. London, 1968). Rowlands' comments on the historical background of the poem offer a valuable analysis of the political context of the poem and throw light generally on the position of Iolo Goch's thought. He does not treat the subjects we concern ourselves with.

<sup>2</sup>It is an interesting aside to note that at the time of the Spanish Armada, and deploring the claim of Glyndŵr to the Principality of Wales, Dr. David Powel of Ruabon insists that the only right inheritor to both the Principality of Wales and the kingdom of England was the earl of March, the representative of the Mortimer line. (Discussed briefly by J. E. Lloyd, Owen Glendower, p. 2).

The editors of IGE point out in a note (IGE<sup>2</sup>. p. 347) that Iolo is probably referring to Roger's status as heir presumptive on p. 45. 11 and p. 46. 33-34, while Rowlands' article gives further and fuller insight into Roger's genealogy which Iolo Goch saw, so Rowlands argues, as entitling him to the rank of both Prince of Wales and King of England. In blazoning Roger's arms, Iolo is very precise and very inclusive, assigning him the arms of Ireland, Wales, France, and England.

But Iolo's poem to Roger Mortimer supplies us also with further evidence of Iolo's familiarity with medieval literary depictions of knighthood in general. From the first line of the poem the chivalric frame of reference is established.

Syr Rosier asur aesawr. . . .  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 44, 1)<sup>1</sup>

The earls of March, the Mortimers, did, in fact, bear an azure shield elaborately decorated with gold. Thus when Iolo Goch describes Roger's shield he is being historically accurate.

Asur sydd yn dy aesawr,  
Iarll Mars gyda'r eurlliw mawr.  
Sinobl ac arian glân gloyw  
Im yw'r ysgwyd amrosgoyw.  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 47, 11-14)

(Trans: The azure and the great golden hue of the Earl of March is on your shield. Gules and argent lustrous and brilliant the crossed shield.)

It is possible that amrosgoyw refers to the cross which Roger Mortimer would have borne on his arms as Iwrl o Wlster ("Earl of Ulster"; IGE<sup>2</sup>. 46, 18). In the following twenty lines, Iolo catalogues the

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Trans: Sir Roger of the azure shield.

appropriate arms of France, Ireland, England, and Wales, as well as the appropriate titles belonging to Sir Roger. While we will not quote such an extended passage here, the point to be made is that Iolo Goch's panegyric is couched in terms of heraldic detail and does not rely solely on the traditional bardic recitation of a genealogical catalogue. Moreover, checking the citations in GPC, one finds that many of the terms used by Iolo in the passage, as in this poem generally, are to be regarded as heraldic usages. For instance, arfau, asur, arian, eurlliw, and sinobl certainly, though the dictionary has not reached thus far. In any case, Iolo's rhetorical question as to what meaning is reflected in the "fair escutcheon" can be answered by heraldic interpretations.

Iolo Goch also draws on the tradition of heraldic beasts; Sir Roger's is y ddraig goch (l. 33), the red dragon of Wales, though there is a certain obscurity in the reference to the lion and the bear:

Darogan yw mai'n draig ni  
 A lunia gwaith eleni;  
 O ben y llew glew ei gledd  
 Coronir câr i Wynedd.  
 Pam mai'r llew crafangdew cryf  
 Mwy nag arth? Manag wrthyf,  
 (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 46, 23-28)

(Trans: It is prophesied that it will be our dragon who will devise action this year; from the head of the lion of daring sword will be crowned Gwynedd's kinsman. Why is it that the mighty lion with thick claw is bigger than a bear? Tell me.)

This passage suggests that Iolo Goch was alluding to the brudiau, or, at least, exploiting the associations that could be drawn from that

tradition in which Warwick was the Bear,<sup>1</sup> though the lion immediately prompts one to think of the kings of England.

Perhaps less impressive, but nonetheless important to our inquiry, is the reference to the golden spurs of knighthood, referred to earlier in this section, and which Iolo appends to the end of the long heraldic passage.

Gwodrudd cerdd, gwaed y ddraig goch  
Yw'r sinobr ysy ynoch.  
Am hynny bydd hy, baedd hoyw,  
A rho eto aur otoyw.  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 47, 33-36)

(Trans: Inciter of song, the blood of the red dragon is the cinnabar within you. Because of that, be bold, lively lord, and put on again the golden spur[s].)

The power invested in one's arms is appreciated by Iolo Goch:

Nid oes ond eisiau arfer  
O arfau prydferth nerth nêr,  
Gwisgo arfau. . . .  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 45 23-25)

(Trans: It is but necessary to wear beautiful armor, the power of a lord, to bear arms. . . .)

Then, turning from the lord equipped for battle (ll. 26-30),

Iolo passes to an account of the tournament:

Ymwan ag ieirll diamwynt,  
Ymwrdd, ymgyhwrdd ag wynt:  
A'th yswain a'th lain o'th flaen, -  
Pennaeth wyd, pwy ni'th adwaen?

<sup>1</sup>On the cywyddau brud and their use of heraldic beasts, see H. I. Bell, The Development of Welsh Poetry (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1936), pp. 85-86.

A'th hengsmon hoyw a'th loyw laif  
 Ar gwrser a ragorsaif;  
 A'th helm lwys, a thalm o lu  
 I'th ôl ar feirch, a theulu;  
 A cherdd o'th flaen o raen rwyf,  
 A chrydr ar belydr balwyf.  
 (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 46, 1-10)

(Trans: Jousting with faultless earls, exchanging blows together with them: With your squire and your blade in front of you, - you are a chief, who does not recognize you? And your lively henchman and your bright sword, on a courser which stands first; with your handsome helmet, and part of the host behind you on horses, and retainers; and your advancing, a lustrous lord, and a shaking of spears like palm-trees.)

This comes pretty close to the narrative spirit. But as with Iolo Goch generally, when he lapses into chivalric features, the passage is not unsuitable or intrusive. In fact, the quality of knighthood conveyed by such passages is exactly the quality Iolo wanted to ascribe to the lord he was praising.

A further point might be made here regarding Iolo's accuracy of description. We mentioned earlier that a knight was regularly accompanied by his squire in the arenas of combat, and so Iolo depicts Sir Roger with his squire before him (yswain,3). A minor point, perhaps, but a technical one worth considering. It is in this poem, too, that Iolo calls himself a herald.

Amserol, mi sy herod,  
 It ddeffroi i gloi dy glod.  
 (47, 5-6)

(Trans: It is time, I am a herald, for you to awaken in order to secure your fame.)



The poem is a repository of information. Not only on historical affairs of the period or for the remarkably heavy use of chivalric and heraldic description, but also in its use of rhetoric, loan words, and what I believe to be literary formulae. The rhetorical devices will be examined in the next chapter; I will remark briefly on the vocabulary in the next few pages. The formulae include some inherited from earlier native poetry and some that appear to be Iolo's creations. As an example of the latter, Iolo uses the same method in presenting Glyndŵr's transition from boyhood to manhood and its claims in Achau Owain Glyndwr.

Gŵr bellach a grybwyllir,  
Ni myn dwyn un man o'i dir.  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 33, 3-4)

(Trans: It is a man henceforth who will be celebrated. Not of his own will shall any part of his land be carried off.)

Compare this with the promise of praise accorded Sir Roger:

Mab fuost, daethost i dir,  
Gŵr bellach a grybwyllir.  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 45, 19-20)

(Trans: You were a boy, you came to land; it is a man henceforth who will be celebrated).

Iolo apparently had a fondness for bual, a fairly unusual word among bards except in reference to the drinking-horn. Iolo's references, on the other hand, are to the animal (figurative in use, of course), applying it twice to Glyndŵr, (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 32, 22 and 34, 4) and once to Sir Roger Mortimer (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 45, 22). Other epithets are largely legacies from the earlier tradition: edlingwalch ("valiant heir"; IGE<sup>2</sup>. 45, 11, where the Anglo-Saxon edling intrudes a bit); eryr trin ("eagle of battle"; 45, 12), dragwn aer ("dragon of war"; 45, 16; again, an English



borrowing); planc plymlwyd ("plank of battle"; 45, 3; wyr burffrwyth iôr Aberffraw ("pure-fruited grandson of the lord of Aberffraw").<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere he flatters Roger by comparing him to Galahad of romance:

Glewach ydwyd, ail Glahath,  
A'th luchwayw hoyw a'th loyw lath.  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 48, 11-12)

(Trans: You are more than a hero, another Galahad, with your fine bright lance and your bright spear.)

Equally probably inspired by romance is the reference to the heroic conquest of a hundred forts (concwerwr can caer; "conqueror of a hundred forts"; 45, 6),<sup>2</sup> and the reference to Ireland as Matholwch's land (Tegwch gwlad Fatholwch fu/Calon Iwerddon orddu; "The fairness of the land of Matholwch was the heart of black Ireland"; 48, 19-20). The reference to Great Niall as an Ulster dog (Ci ffalstwf cyff o Wlster; "Ulster dog from a stock of treacherous growth"; 48, 32), is apparently a term of abuse rather than an allusion to the Ulster sagas.

Before going on to further examination of the romance tradition as it is reflected in the works of the cywyddwyr, I should like to make a few comments on the vocabularies of the poems that I have been discussing. Some fifty years ago T. H. Parry-Williams held that the vocabularies of the cywyddwyr merited special study.<sup>3</sup> I would like to suggest that several of the terms that come up in the chivalric context under investigation here might be given diachronic study to determine if

<sup>1</sup>IGE<sup>2</sup> 45, 1.14.

<sup>2</sup>We have noted the formulaic detail of this figure earlier in a cywydd by Gruffudd Llwyd.

<sup>3</sup>The English Element In Welsh (London): The Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, 1923), p. 14.

any semantic shift took place and when. Glendid, for instance, would appear to have had at one point the more specialized meaning of "radiance" as stemming from chastity. Other words, too, might have extended their semantic boundaries under romance influence. The adjective digrif, for example, is not found as a descriptive epithet before its appearance in The White Book Mabinogion, according to citations in the Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru, though Lloyd-Jones' earliest examples are from the Gogynfeirdd. It might, then, be a profitable exercise to trace down the usage and semantic development of digrif, glendid, mwyn, tirion<sup>1</sup> and similar words used by the Gogynfeirdd and cywyddwyr.

A large number of words that appear in these poems are loans from Middle English, and it is possible that some of the French borrowings entered through English. A sampling from the Welsh texts (both poetic and prose) indicates that romancers and bards shared a specialized vocabulary, and that in most cases the earliest poetic usage is in the works of the fourteenth-century bards. Some terms, such as iarll, arfau, arian, tarian,<sup>2</sup> and the like, include earlier imports from Latin, French, Norse. But arf(au) and arian acquire specialized heraldic meaning during the late fourteenth century. According to GPC, arf(au) first appears in the specialized sense of armorial bearings in Iolo Goch's cywydd to Sir Roger Mortimer; it is next attested in Lewis Glyn Cothi. The earliest citation

<sup>1</sup>I. e., pleasant or agreeable; beauty; gentle; gentle or gracious, respectively.

<sup>2</sup>I. e., earl; armorial bearings (as opposed to simply "weapons"); argent (as opposed to "silver" or "money"); shield.

the GPC provides for arian meaning argent is 15g. Pen. 109.5, which is a poem by L. Glyn Cothi, though there can be no doubt that Iolo Goch was using the heraldic sense in the poem to Sir Roger Mortimer. Ystorya Carolo Magno (YCM). 53 provides an example of romance usage: Ierius. . . a wisgwys ysparduneu o eur ac aryant am y draet.<sup>1</sup> This is purely romance; as we have seen, silver spurs are the mark of a squire, gold of a knight. In actual practice one would not wear both metals.

Asur, ("azure"), too, appears to have acquired a specialization of meaning. Its early use referred to "blue material," or "blue, azure, lapis" (GPC) but interestingly enough it is so found first in works of our period. In Breudwyt Ronabwy (WM 219. 28-9); YCM 52. 3; in Gruffudd ap Maredudd's Moli Gwenhwyvar (RBP 1329. 1-2); Hengwrt MSS, i. 191; IGE<sup>2</sup>. 177,4 used by Llywelyn ap y Moel, but without heraldic significance, and by Iolo Goch with heraldic significance. Parry-Williams believes the word could have been borrowed either from Middle English or from French; the GPC etymology is given as Middle English.

Antur ("adventure," "feat"), according to Parry-Williams is derived from Middle English or early Modern English. The GPC's earliest recorded example is from the fourteenth century.

Other terms, such as barwn ("baron"), crest ("crest"), baner ("banner"), ystondardd ("standard"), sabl ("black," used in a heraldic context in the poems examined here), sinobl ("cinnabar" or "vermilion"), fflwr-de-lis ("fleur-de-lis"), habrsiwn ("habergeon"), yswain ("squire"),

<sup>1</sup>"Ierius. . . wore spurs of gold and silver on his feet."  
Stephen J. Williams, ed., Ystorya De Carolo Magno (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1968), p. 53, ll. 14-15.

cwrswr ("courser, charger" or "knight"), socet ("socket"), cordwan ("cordovan," i. e., fine Spanish leather), herod ("herald"), and cwncwerwr ("conqueror") all enter Welsh during this period and in most cases English functioned as a linguistic middle-man. They appear both in the poetry we have been investigating and in the native Welsh chwedlau and the romances. I have not seen them so used in the Mabinogion.

While certain formulae appear to be limited to poetic use, e. g., minor verbal variations of the hero fighting in blood ankle-deep,<sup>1</sup> others seem to be shared by bards and romances alike. For instance, the description of the hero as having a falcon's (or eagle's, or hawk's) sight.<sup>2</sup>

When we turn more specifically to romance usages and references as they appear in the poetry, our suspicion about a possible borrowing from romance sources is strengthened. At the very least, they certainly indicate a ready familiarity with the romances.

Rachel Bromwich has detailed many of the bardic references to romance heroes and figures drawn from the Triads. In her introductory remarks, Mrs. Bromwich dates the flow of foreign literary materials into the

<sup>1</sup>This formula is used by Iolo Goch (A gollwng. . . /Y gwaed tros draed; "and letting flow. . . blood over the feet"; IGE<sup>2</sup>. 27.4), and by Gruffudd ap Maredudd in his exhortation to Owain ap Tomas ap Rhodri in RBP 1313. 22-23 (Gwna. . . gwaetlin gwyarwlych; "Make a massacre, a steeping in blood"). Nonetheless, this cliché is certainly earlier, and can be found in the Gogynfeirdd and the Gododdin.

<sup>2</sup>E. g., llygad eryr ("the sight of an eagle"; Llywelyn ap y Moel in IGE<sup>2</sup>. 204, 5); a golwg gwalch ("vision of a hawk"; Gruffudd Llwyd in IGE<sup>2</sup>. 113, 28); a llygeit mawr hebogeid ("and great hawk-like eyes"; in Breudwyt Ronabwy, p. 14, ll. 6-7; Melville Richards, ed. (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1948).

bardic compendia as mid-thirteenth century, which she judges to coincide with the decreasing familiarity of the bards with the native tales.<sup>1</sup>

While there is a discernible influx of foreign materials about this time, there are occasional striking allusions in the work of the bards to the native tales. These allusions are particularly evident in the work of Gruffudd Llwyd.

Thomas Roberts, Gruffudd Llwyd's editor in IGE, held that Gruffudd Llwyd was one of the most able and most important bards of his age. Roberts saw Gruffudd Llwyd as a storyteller, learned in the Triads, the chwedlau, and the romances.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, he knew the Chwedleu Seith Doethon Rufein which he refers to repeatedly in his elegy to Rhydderch,<sup>3</sup> making, in the same poem, elaborate comparisons to Adam in Triads 47, 48, 49. In a cywydd to Amrhedudd [sic], he provides an account of the tale of Arthur and Rhita Gawr, while in a cywydd to Owain Glyndŵr<sup>4</sup> he demonstrates his familiarity with the role assigned to Uthr Pendragon in the Bruts. In the same poem, and following this reference to Uthr, Gruffudd Llwyd compares Glyndŵr's exploits with those of Owein and the knight of the fountain.

I find a sequence of lines in another cywydd of his to Glyndŵr particularly suggestive.

<sup>1</sup>TYP, op. cit., p. lxxxii.

<sup>2</sup>"Rhagymadrodd," IGE<sup>2</sup>, pages xii-xxiii.

<sup>3</sup>IGE<sup>2</sup>. XXXVIII.

<sup>4</sup>IGE<sup>2</sup>. 123, 6-8.

Brenhinoedd. . .  
 Bum hugain ar Lundain lys,  
 Coronog, ceirw yr ynys.  
 (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 126, 8-10)

(Trans: ~~Five~~ ~~score~~ crowned kings at the court of London, stags of the island.)

The formula, ultimately derived from Geoffrey of Monmouth and repeated in Brut y Brenhinedd, is no doubt behind the uses in the Mabinogion.

Bendigeiduran uab Llyr a oed urenhin  
 coronawc ar yr ynys hon, ac ardyrchawc  
 o goron Lundein.<sup>1</sup>

(Trans: Bendigeidfran, son of Llyr, was a crowned king on this island, and famed for having the crown of London.)

Iolo Coch's praise of Syr Hywel y Fwyall includes two passages which describe the activities of the ladies at Syr Hywel's court:

Rhianedd. . .  
 Yn gwau y sidan glân gloyw.  
 (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 25, 13-14)

(Trans: Maidens. . . weaving glowing bright silk.)

A'i wraig, Syr, wregys euraid,  
 Hywel, iôn rhyfel yn rhaid;  
 A'i llawforynion ton teg -  
 Ydd oeddynt hwy bob ddeuddeg  
 Yn gwau sidan glân gloyliw,  
 (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 26, 11-15)

1

Derick Thomson, ed., Branwen Uerch Lyr (Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1961), 11. 1-2. In his notes to line 2, Thomson considers W. J. Gruffudd's belief that this phrase (ardyrchawc o goron Lundein) owes "something to the Latinity of Geoffrey" (p. 19).

(Trans: And his wife (of Sir Hywel, lord of war in time of stress), golden girdled; and her fair complexioned handmaidens - all twelve of them were weaving pure, bright-colored silk.)

This picture corresponds to one drawn by the romancer of Owein:

a Gwenhwyuar a'e llawuorynyon yn gwniaw  
wrth ffenestyr.

(ll. 3-4)

(Trans: And Guenever and her handmaidens embroidering by the window.)

Since we cannot be exhaustive within the space of this paper, I will content myself with forwarding but one more example, and that from Dafydd ap Gwilym in a cywydd to Dyddgu.

Nid annhebyg, ddiddig ddydd,  
Modd ei phryd, medd ei phrydydd,  
I'r ferch hygar a garawdd  
36 Y milwr gynt, mau lwyr gawdd,  
Peredur ddwysgur ddisgwyl  
Fab Efrog, gwrdd farchog gŵyl,  
Pan oedd yn edrych, wych wawl,  
40 Yn yr eiry, iôn eryrawl,  
Llen asur ger llwyn Eryllt,  
Llwybr balch lle buasai'r gwalch gwyllt  
Yn lladd, heb neb a'i lluddiai,  
44 Mwyalch, morwyn falch, ar fai.  
Yno'r oedd iawn arwyddion . . . .  
Mewn eiry gogyfuch, luvch lwyth,  
Modd ei thâl, medd ei thylwyth;  
Asgell y fwyalch esgud  
Megis ei hael, megais hud;  
Gwaed yr edn gwedy r'odi,  
Gradd haul, mal ei gruddiau hi.

(GDG 45, 33-52)

(Trans: Her kind of beauty is not unlike, says her poet, to the kind of beauty possessed by the amiable girl loved by the warrior of old - my total frustration - Peredur, son of Efrog, strong modest knight, in deep care watching, when he, splendid bright one, looked in the

snow, eagle-like lord, at the blue cloak [i. e., bluish-white cover of snow], near Esyllt's grove at the arrogant track where the wild hawk had been, killing without anyone who would stop him from villany, a blackbird, proud maid. There, there were true signs in the undisturbed snow, piled drift; it is like her forehead, say her kind; the wing of the swift blackbird is like her eyebrow. ?I fostered magic; the bird's blood after the snow is like her cheeks - sun's eminence.)

One need do no more than refer to Historia Peredur vab Evrawc (WM 140, 15-25). This metaphoric description of Dyddgu, though it draws on images from other literary sources, manages to be simultaneously dynamic and delicate. Dafydd's skill at manipulating his subject by a variety of expressive devices will be reviewed in the next chapter as we examine his use of rhetorical technique, and in Chapter V where we review his treatment of women in the love poetry.



## Chapter III

WALES AND THE LATIN MIDDLE AGES

A historical consideration of any medieval literature must take into account the relation of that literature to the Latin Middle Ages. There are many starting points - linguistic, philosophic, the historical aspects of Scholasticism, literary and cultural historical comparison. This chapter will attempt to place Wales within the larger cultural climate of the Latin Middle Ages by examining certain rhetorical mannerisms that appear in the Welsh poetry of the period. Up to the present this area of Welsh literary activity has received no comprehensive or detailed investigation, although the need for such study has been recognized by D. M. Lloyd, who observed that a specific comparison of Celtic poetic techniques with the Latin texts would "be the topic of a long and valuable essay."<sup>1</sup>

Questions of rhetorical mannerism in Welsh verse have been traditionally assumed to be largely native features passed down to

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Lloyd's two-part article, "Estheteg yr Oesoedd Canol," Llên Cymru (I, 3 and 4; 1951) argues that the aesthetic and cultural climate of the Latin Middle Ages reached Wales most probably through the Cistercians who, Lloyd believes, were likely to have spread Latin rhetorical doctrine. Yet neither Mr. Lloyd nor other critics writing on this aspect of Welsh poetic mannerism offer any textual examination of tropes, figures, topoi, etc. The scholarship in this area is largely limited to reviews of "ideas," taken from Aristotle and medieval Latin writers on aesthetics and poetics; but even here, the ideas are not applied to specific discussions of the Welsh texts themselves. Nonetheless, Mr. Lloyd's articles are themselves valuable contributions, as is Saunders Lewis' discussion of nominalism and realism in relation to the cywyddwyr that appears in his Braslun o Hanes Llenyddiaeth Gymraeg hyd 1535 (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1932). A more recent paper by D. Simon Evans, "Rhyddiaith Anchwedlonol yr Oesoedd Canol," Llên Cymru, XI, 3 and 4 (1971), pp. 131-139, considers Welsh prose against the backdrop of medieval Latin learning, while D. J. Bowen's "Dafydd ap Gwilym a Datblygiad y Cywydd," Llên Cymru, VIII, 1 (1964), pp. 1-32 examines several rhetorical ornaments in Dafydd's verse.

the bards through the bardic schools, and so mired in conjecture and circular "proofs" that it is perhaps best to review them briefly here.

The traditional reasoning arguing for medieval bardic familiarity with rhetoric rests on (1) the assumption that bardic schools would have trained their pupils in the use of parola ornata, (2) the premise that such training would have used grammars specifically compiled for bardic instruction, and (3) the belief that Einion Offeiriad's and Dafydd Ddu's grammars provided models for these manuals of bardic instruction. The difficulties, as I see them, are these: the lack of certain evidence for bardic schools - and this lack is acknowledged by Lloyd-Jones in his Sir John Rhys lecture<sup>1</sup> although he goes on to assume that "their existence is self evident."<sup>2</sup> Given the absence of evidence for such bardic institutions, the attempt to hypothesize what was taught in them remains, therefore, purely conjectural. What followed was a series of premises and assumptions which in time become accepted dogma. The leaps of faith that characterize this area of Welsh scholarship can be traced back to Sir John Morris-Jones' Cerdd Dafod (1925), G. J. Williams' and E. J. Jones' Gramadegau'r Pencerdidiaid (1934), and D. Gwenallt Jones' "Rhethreg Yng Nghyfundrefn Y Beirdd," Y Llenor (1933). These three works form the core of subsequent discussions of bardic style, Welsh metrics, grammar and rhetoric and are now regarded as the authoritative statements on these topics.

<sup>1</sup>"The Court Poets of the Welsh Princes," Vol XXXIV, Proc. of the Br. Acad. (1948), pp. 167-197. And, of course, references by the Gogynfeirdd in the poetry itself suggest the existence of such schools. See Lloyd-Jones' notes for references.

<sup>2</sup>Lloyd-Jones, p. 170.

John Morris-Jones' Cerdd Dafod<sup>1</sup> was a seminal contribution to Welsh scholarship. Not a polemic, this work analysed the twenty-four bardic metres and the fundamental principles of Welsh metrics. Morris-Jones' efforts were followed by G. J. Williams and E. J. Jones<sup>2</sup> who collected and edited a number of grammars which Williams called the "gramadegau'r pencerddiaid" because "they contain a compendium of instruction received by pupils in bardic schools,"<sup>3</sup> though Parry, in his History, concluded that the grammar could not have been intended to help anyone writing in Welsh.<sup>4</sup> In his Sir John Rhys lecture Parry again queried the purpose of the grammar as well as the author's non-bardic orientation noting his "ignorance of details of bardic craft."<sup>5</sup>

The texts themselves are best regarded as grammatical treatises, elaborating on the vowels, consonants and diphthongs, syllables, and the parts of speech, with some limited attention given to syntax. In addition to the strictly grammatical portions, the Welsh tracts incorporate what is essentially a vernacular ars poetica setting out the measure of cerdd dafod, the forbidden flaws in poetic composition, and the manner in which each thing is to be praised. The emphasis, however, is on metrics,

<sup>1</sup>Oxford University Press, 1925.

<sup>2</sup>Gramadegau'r Pencerddiaid (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1934).

<sup>3</sup>Rhagair, p. v.

<sup>4</sup>History of Welsh Literature, trans. H. I. Bell (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1955), p. 132.

<sup>5</sup>"A Welsh Metrical Treatise," Proceedings of the British Academy, XLVII (1961), pp. 177-195.

placement of the metrical accent, cynghanedd, and poetic forms. There can be very little doubt that the grammatical sections of the grammars are based on grammatical features of Latin and that they are derived from the Latin grammars associated with Donatus and Priscian.<sup>1</sup> The section on cerdd dafod, however, represents a native tradition of bardic usage though it has been adapted and presented by a compiler who was not expert.<sup>2</sup> These sections on Welsh poetic usage owe little, if anything, to Latin rhetorics as is most immediately apparent in their omission of any discussion of rhetorical organization, means of amplification, figures of speech, and the like which occupied prominent positions in medieval rhetorical manuals.<sup>3</sup>

D. Gwenallt Jones is repeatedly cited as the standard reference to rhetorical investigations into Welsh poetic practice. His title indeed suggests that the paper will be an inquiry into rhetorical practices,<sup>4</sup> but, in fact, there is no analysis or examination of figures, tropes or topoi. Jones' thesis is that the bards, as early as the Gogynfeirdd, were amenable to the uses of rhetoric; that they used ornamental language

<sup>1</sup>Ifor Williams first called attention to the affinities with Donatus and Priscian in "Awdl i Rys ap Gruffudd, gan Einion Offeiriad; Dosbarth Einion ar Ramadeg a'i Ddyled i Ddonatus," Y Cymmrodor, XXVI (1916), pp. 115-146. Williams and Jones print representative portions of Latin grammars in the Appendix to GP which further substantiate claims for Latin influence.

<sup>2</sup>See Parry's discussion in his Sir John Rhys lecture, op. cit., where he forwards specific examples of the compiler's confusion.

<sup>3</sup>See, for instance, Edmond Faral's preliminary analysis and edition of Geoffrey of Vinsauf and Matthew of Vendome in Les Arts Poétiques du XII<sup>e</sup> et du XIII<sup>e</sup> Siecle (Paris, 1924).

<sup>4</sup>"Rhethreg yng Nghyfundrefn y Beirdd," Y Llenor, vol. 12 (1933), pp. 158-172.

purposefully; that Einion Offeriaid's Grammar can be clearly understood to be a manual of rhetoric; that there were guidelines governing who to praise, in what terms the praise was to be forwarded, and that certain classes of bards were accorded certain functions, verse forms and topics. In all, the article is basically a generalized discussion arguing that ornamental language and archaic diction mark the poetry of the Gogynfeirdd in their encomiastic verse, while the poetry of Dafydd ap Gwilym deviates from earlier usage in the subjects of praise - namely, women and nature. In this discussion, as in most allusions to rhetoric by subsequent critics, considerations of rhetoric are largely limited to the epideictic.

Thomas Parry's remarks on Einion's Grammar quite sensibly suggest caution regarding conjectures on the reason for its compilation because "our knowledge of the original author and of the circumstances of the times in Wales is so limited,"<sup>1</sup> while he concludes elsewhere that the treatise is not "a codification of existing practice,"<sup>2</sup> and that, "taken as a whole, [it cannot] be regarded as a manual for instruction for aspiring bards, nor is it a product of the schools."<sup>3</sup>

Since the solution of these difficulties is not immediately relevant to our present concerns, although the topic is one of some interest and considerable import, it is best to leave it at this. In any case, the tracts do not offer that specific guidance in rhetorical devices which

<sup>1</sup>"A Welsh Metrical Treatise," op. cit., p. 190.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 182.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 189.

is found in the Latin rhetorical manuals and with which we will be concerned here. Since there is nothing in them to have offered a model for bardic rhetorical imitation, the bards who do use rhetorical devices in their work must have acquired them somewhere else. We will not, however, engage in speculation as to sources, but limit our consideration to examination of the devices themselves. In short, the section in this chapter which treats rhetorical figures and topoi can best be regarded as descriptive analysis. From that analysis it will be seen that Welsh poets, at least to a small degree, shared poetic topics and mannerisms with other medieval European writers. But first, some preliminary attention will be given to the historical importance of grammar and rhetoric and their almost ubiquitous influence on medieval poetry and poetic theory.

On the continent, poetry was connected with grammar and rhetoric by long usage.<sup>1</sup> Grammar was an important ancillary subject which was preparatory to the study of rhetoric. The major grammars were those of Donatus, Diomedes, Priscian and Horace, and the schemata found there gained wide popularity throughout the Middle Ages. Not unlike the Welsh tracts, they were full of interminable classifications, definitions and rules which were mainly concerned with technical laws of language,

<sup>1</sup>There is an extensive bibliography on this subject, but the most important are: E. R. Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, Bollingen Series (New York: Pantheon, 1953); Eric Auerbach, Literary Language and Its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Ages, Bollingen Series (New York: Pantheon, 1965); R. McKeon, "Rhetoric in the Middle Ages," Speculum 17 (1942), pp. 1-32. See, too, James J. Murphy's Medieval Rhetoric: A Select Bibliography (University of Toronto Press, 1971).



although figures and tropes, metrics and style received some treatment.

Rhetoric, inherited from classical antiquity, dominated literary studies and literary performance. The elaborate theory of this tradition was available in such texts as Cicero's De Inventione and the Rhetorica ad Herennium erroneously attributed to him.<sup>1</sup> Translations of Cicero in the European vernaculars appeared around the middle of the thirteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Manuals of rhetoric gained wide popularity; the most prominent and important included Geoffrey of Vinsauf's Poetria Nova (modelled largely on the Rhetorica ad Herennium), Matthew of Vendôme's Ars Versificatoria, John of Garland's Poetria, and a compendium of schematic treatments by encyclopedists<sup>3</sup> such as Martianus Capella, Isidor and Rabanus Maurus, to name but a few. The influence of Virgil and Ovid on the Middle Ages is common enough knowledge, and they proved rich store-houses of easily adaptable subject matter as well as sources of rhetorical imitation.

Rhetoric and grammar, as we know, were two of the subjects of the trivium. In the course of their study, students spent much time imitating

<sup>1</sup>Faral's comparison of later medieval prescriptions with the Rhetorica ad Herennium shows that in the area of rhetoric no detail of classical theory of style was lost for any considerable time (pp. 52-54).

<sup>2</sup>So eminent was Cicero's status and renown, that Chaucer's Franklin, a member of the new bourgeoisie, not only refers to him, but cites his complete name. "I lerned nevere rethorik, certeyn;/ Thyng that I speke, it mot be bare and pleyn./ I sleep nevere on the Mount of Pernaso,/ Ne lerned Marcus Tullius Scithero." (The Franklin's Prologue," in The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. F. N. Robinson), ll. 719-722.

<sup>3</sup>This extensive subject is of prime importance in the history of ideas. The number of writings and the range of the encyclopedists, commentators, curriculum authors, etc., and their importance is reviewed by Curtius.

the classical and received writers. This exercise, along with training in the ars poetica, naturally resulted in highly artificial and formalized mannerisms. Such mannerism penetrated most literary expression - lyric and narrative poetry and prose, and eventually found its way into the vernaculars.<sup>1</sup> Rhetoric, as Curtius has stressed, "takes us deeper into the world of medieval culture than does grammar,"<sup>2</sup> but curriculum authors included grammarians as well.<sup>3</sup> It is of some interest to note that among the curriculum authors cited as "authorities" by Curtius,<sup>4</sup> a number were known in Wales. Donatus, who was regarded as perhaps the grammatical authority and whose importance cannot be overstressed, lent his name to the medieval Welsh word for "grammar" - dwneid.<sup>5</sup> Juvenius, too, exists in a tenth-century manuscript of apparent Welsh provenance, as do Martianus

<sup>1</sup>For discussions on how the ars poetica directly or indirectly affected vernacular efforts, see: F. W. Patterson, Three Centuries of French Poetic Theory: A Critical History of the Chief Arts of Poetry in France (1328 - 1630), 2 vols. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1935); for Chaucer, J. M. Manly, "Chaucer and the Rhetoricians," Proceedings of the British Academy, 12 (1926); Robert O. Payne, The Key of Remembrance (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963). Among medieval texts on poetic theory and the transmission of the rhetorical tradition in vernacular versions, one of the most important is Brunetto Latini's II Tesoro, P. Chabaille, ed., 4 vols. (Bologna, 1878).

<sup>2</sup>Curtius, op. cit., p. 62.

<sup>3</sup>Curriculum authors, i. e., authors studied in the medieval schools, included Virgil, Horace, Martianus Capella, Juvenal, Boethius, Statius, Terence, Lucan, Ovid, Cicero, Prudentius, etc.

<sup>4</sup>European Literature. . . , op. cit., pp. 48-54.

<sup>5</sup>See Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru, p. 1105; and, again, Sir Ifor Williams' article in Y Cymmrodor, op. cit. Cf. Gramadegau'r Pencerdidiaid, 67 and the examples in Lloyd-Jones' Geirfa.



Cappella and Boethius.<sup>1</sup> Michael Lapidge's survey of early Latin poetry of the Sulien family includes a number of curriculum authors:<sup>2</sup> Virgil, Ovid, and the Christian poets Juvenius, Prudentius, and Sedulius, as well as Boethius and Martianus Capella. According to Mr. Lapidge, it is also possible that Statius' Thebaid and Horace's Carmen Saeculare were known, and perhaps Juvenal.

Grammar, rhetoric and dialectic merged during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries into the poetic prescriptions which served Chaucer and many others.<sup>3</sup> Classical theories (and medieval adaptations of them) of rhetoric formed the basis and furnished much of the material, channeled as it was through Cicero, Quintilian and Horace, and projected by Donatus, Augustine, Boethius, Isidore, Cassiodorus, Martianus Capella and Rabanus Maurus, to mention a few. So extensive was the influence and so pervasive, reaching the writings of the Scholastics, the Church Fathers, the commentaries, and allegorêsis as well as the poetic modes,

<sup>1</sup>On the Welsh contribution to the revival of Latin learning in the tenth century, and for fuller bibliographical citations on these MSS, see T. A. M. Bishop, "The Corpus Martianus Capella," Trans. Cambridge Bibliog. Soc., Vol. IV (1964-1968), pp. 257-275.

<sup>2</sup>Michael Lapidge, "The Welsh-Latin Poetry of Sulien's Family," Studia Celtica, VIII - IX (1973), pp. 68-106 and 23-74.

<sup>3</sup>Such prescriptions were in the form of advice given for the achievement of an effective style, and included eight methods of amplification; i. e., effective development of theme; rhetorical figures used for ornata difficultas (e. g., nominatio, circuitio and several others); colores associated with ornata facilitas (e. g., repetitio, exclamatio, occupatio, and thirty-some more); these colores were known as figures of speech, as opposed to figures of thought for which there were also extensive rules and models. See Faral, Part II, "La Doctrine," for a comprehensive treatment of theory, descriptions, and definitions.

that it would have been almost impossible for Wales to have escaped some acquaintance with rhetorical methods and models.

As suggested earlier, following the prescriptions of the rhetorical method led to excessively artificial poetry, so that the products can be more accurately described as versified rhetorical exercises.<sup>1</sup> Mechanical use of rhetorical devices was so current that the excesses of indiscriminate use become the subject of satire by Chaucer: Sir Topas, The House of Fame, and certain mocking lines in the Nun's Priest's Tale.<sup>2</sup> Though it must be added that Chaucer put rhetoric to serious and masterful use elsewhere.

While it would have been difficult for anyone writing in Latin during the Middle Ages to have avoided heavily rhetorical language, or rhetorical organization and development of theme, it would be somewhat less difficult

<sup>1</sup>In any discussion of mannered linguistic excess the Hisperica Famina comes to mind, but I am not equipped to deal with this forbidding and obscure topic which has long troubled scholars. In any case, the reader interested in this terrifying jargon may be referred to Hisperica Famina, ed. F. J. H. Jenkinson (Cambridge, 1908); and E. K. Rand, "The Irish Flavour of Hisperica Famina," in Studien zur lateinischen Dichtung des Mittelalters, ed. W. Stach and H. Walther (Dresden, 1931).

<sup>2</sup>The Nun's Priest's Tale affords illustration of the exclamative rhetorical style so typical of the period, and in it Chaucer pokes some fun at Geoffrey of Vinsauf's model for amplification through the devices of apostrophe and exclamatio.

Geoff. of = Vinsauf	<p>O destinee, that mayst nat been eschewed!          Allas, that Chauntecleer fleigh fro the bemes!          Allas, his wyf ne roghte nat of dremes! . . .          O Venus, that art goddesse of plesaunce. . . .          O <u>Gaufred</u>, deere maister soverayn,          That whan thy worthy kyng Richard was slayn          With shot, compleynedest his deeth so soore,          Why ne hadde I now thy sentence and thy loore,          The Friday for to chide, as diden ye?          (11. 3338-51)</p>
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for vernacular writers to avoid rhetorical techniques. Yet the vernacular writers would almost certainly have encountered models of inflated rhetoric in sermon and pulpit oratory, chronicles and lives, hymns and sequences, and examples of rhetorical description in the romances, to cite some of the obvious channels of transmission available to them. Among the devotional works in Welsh were translations of the Salve Regina and the Veni creator spiritus found in Y Gysegrlan Fuchedd<sup>1</sup> which itself is in a rhetorically rich style, not in itself surprising, since most religious literature of the Welsh Middle Ages was derived from Latin originals which were themselves threaded with rhetoric. Professor Foster and others have pointed out that the description of the youthful Christ in Y Gysegrlan Fuchedd is highly rhetorical,<sup>2</sup> and that its imagery must be understood "within the context of earlier medieval Latin religious writing."<sup>3</sup> Professor J. E. Caerwyn Williams, although he discounts any major influence of Latin culture on the Irish and Welsh vernacular cultures, admits that "the precise nature of the debt, which both must acknowledge

<sup>1</sup>In The Elucidarium and Other Tracts in Welsh from Llyvyr Agkyr Llandewivrevi, ed. Sir John Rhys and John Morris-Jones (Oxford, 1884). This important text is discussed by H. Idris Foster, "The Book of the Anchorite," Proc. of the Br. Acad., Vol. XXXVI (1949), pp. 197-226; J. E. Caerwyn Williams, "Medieval Welsh Religious Prose," Proc. of the Second Internat'l Congress of Celtic Studies (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1966), pp. 65-97; and receives some attention from Glanmor Williams, The Welsh Church from Conquest to Reformation (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1962), pp. 96ff.

<sup>2</sup>Foster, pp. 209-213; G. Williams, pp. 96-97.

<sup>3</sup>G. Williams, quoting Foster, p. 97.

to medieval Latin culture, remains to be defined."<sup>1</sup>

Rhetoric also invaded the domain of chronicle writing,<sup>2</sup> and the Brut y Tywysogyon<sup>3</sup> is an interesting example of the chronicler's handling of literary materials. According to its editor, "one prominent feature of the chronicle is the set eulogies of princes and churchmen," as well as its deliberately literary effect which is achieved by assigning speeches to some of the figures, the attempt to dramatize events by "the heroic quality of his narrative in places, and the many set rhetorical panegyrics."<sup>4</sup> Among the panegyrics is a notable elegy of eighteen couplets to the Lord Rhys<sup>5</sup> comparing him to a number of classical heroes: Hector, Achilles, Nestor, Solomon, Paris, Ajax, Samson.<sup>6</sup> Jones also points out, in his article, that the compiler of the chronicle borrows a simile from Gildas' De Excidio Britanniae, knows the Gawain of romance and Merlin and his prophecies, refers to the 'songs of Virgil,' and 'the histories of Statius

<sup>1</sup>J. E. Caerwyn Williams, p. 76.

<sup>2</sup>See Curtius for a background on this subject, Jerome's adaptation of Eusebius, for instance, and Isidore's influence.

<sup>3</sup>Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS. 20 Version, ed. Thomas Jones (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1952).

<sup>4</sup>Thomas Jones, "Historical Writing in Medieval Welsh," Scottish Studies, Vol. 12, part 1 (1968), pp. 15-27.

<sup>5</sup>The appearance of this elegy in Higden's Polychronicon and its subsequent inclusion in Trevisa's fourteenth-century English translation (Rolls Series, Vol. III, 1882; Cap. XXXI) is particularly interesting because the elegy is found only in Peniarth 20.

<sup>6</sup>According to Artes Poeticae and John of Garland, in praising a knight one properly refers to him as a Hector or an Ajax. See Lloyd-Jones' Geirfa for the numerous references in the gogynfeirdd to Echdor (Hector), Echel (Achilles), and Ercwl (Hercules).

the historian.<sup>1</sup> All this suggests that this compiler, who, according to Thomas Jones, was certainly a Welshman, was working faithfully within the medieval tradition of letters.

As for the romances, they are known to owe a substantial debt to rhetoric, particularly in their descriptions of persons, courts and castles, natural landscapes, horses, raiment and exotic detail. Their descriptive passages, in addition, often rest on certain well-established topoi which had become standard subjects for amplification. The early French romances owe much to direct imitation of Virgil and Ovid from whom they would have borrowed certain elements of style. Eric Auerbach, for instance, has devoted a substantial chapter to the consideration of romance style and its classically inherited traits.<sup>2</sup> In this chapter, "Camilla, or, The Rebirth of the Sublime," he analyzes at length the conclusion of the seventh book of the Aeneid (ll. 803-817) in which Camilla's arrival among the host of the Ausonian heroes is described in three effective anaphoric periods.<sup>3</sup> He then passes to an examination of the rhetorical description of Camilla in the Old French Enéas (ll. 3959-4106) showing the French poet's rhetorical amplification of the Virgilian passage.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Jones, "Hist. Writing. . . ," p. 24.

<sup>2</sup>Literary Language and Its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Ages, Bollingen Series LXXIV (New York: Pantheon, 1964), pp. 183-233.

<sup>3</sup>Anaphora, or repetitio, is the repetition of the same word at the beginning of successive clauses. Thus in Virgil's passage we find:  
non illa . . . illa . . . illam . . . (VII, 185, 188, and 192).

<sup>4</sup>Included in this passage is the rhetorical topos descriptio pulchritudinis which we will examine in detail in the course of this chapter. One might further compare the French description of Camilla with the description of Bercilak's lady in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, ll. 942-969. Amplification, the expansion of a subject, was a favorite device among medieval poets and romancers, and accounted for many of their lavish descriptions of heroes and heroines, landscapes, tournaments, clothing, and the like.

Epic stylization and descriptions of landscape appear both in the romances and in the poetry of the Middle Ages, and are firmly rooted in classical antiquity, finding their way from such curriculum authors as Virgil, Ovid, and Statius into such major medieval works as Chaucer's Parlement of Foules and the best of the Middle English romances, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight.<sup>1</sup> The Welsh romances show an equal fondness for elaborate and lavish description. Owein, for instance, repeatedly turns to descriptions of exotic and costly apparel,<sup>2</sup> and includes a standard rhetorical topos, the wild forest which houses extraordinary beasts such as lions and leopards, in which trees of various species are prominent, and in which marvellous happenings occur.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Hautdesert, for instance, is lodged in such a landscape, and the Gawain-poet pauses in his narrative to devote almost forty lines to its description. See, too, Eric Auerbach's excellent and detailed discussion of this topos in Mimesis (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1957), especially Chapter VI.

<sup>2</sup>For example; Ac yna y deuthum y vaes mawr, ac yn diben y maes y gwelwn kaer vawr llywychedic a gweilgi yn gyfagos y'r gaer. A ffarth a'r gaer y deuthum; ac nachaf deu was pengrych melyn, a ractal eur am pen pob vn onadunt, a ffeis o bali melyn am bop vn onadunt, a dwy wintas o gordwal newyd am traet pob vn, a gwaegau eur ar vynygleu eu traet yn eu kau; a bwa o ascwrn eliffant yn llaw pob vn onadunt, a llinyneu o ieu hyd arnadunt, a saetheu ac eu peleidyr o askwrn morwil gwedy eu haskellu ac adaned paun, a ffenheu eur ar y peleidyr . . . (ll. 39-47,

in R. L. Thomson's edition, Owein, DIAS, 1968).

(Trans: And then I came to a great plain, and at the end of the plain I saw a large, shining castle, and a sea near to the castle. And I came towards the castle, and behold, two youths with curly yellow hair, and a frontlet of gold about the head of each of them, and a tunic of yellow brocaded silk on each of them, and two ankle-high boots of new cordovan leather on the feet of each one, and clasps of gold on their insteps fastening them; and a bow of ivory in the hand of each of them, and bow-strings of deer sinews with them, and arrows with their shafts of walrus ivory feathered with peacocks' feathers, and tips of gold on the shafts. . . .)

<sup>3</sup>Again, see E. Auerbach's Mimesis, pp. 107-124 for a discussion of this topos.



Given the romances, the stylized Christian hymns, the presence of rhetorical passages in the chronicles, and the pervasive influence of classical culture on the Middle Ages, it would not have been necessary for Welsh poets to have been directly acquainted with rhetorical manuals in order to have come in contact with rhetorical mannerism. If the writer was educated - the clerical compiler of the Brut, Ieuan ap Rhydderch, and possibly Iolo Goch and Dafydd ap Gwilym - there is some justification in assuming knowledge. But one cannot go any further at this point, for interpretations based on "influences" and assumptions of familiarity with particular works must remain unconvincing unless it can be shown that there is at least a reasonable chance of the author's having read the works in question. The Welsh romances obviously inherited their rhetorical passages from their French sources; the religious texts, likewise, would incorporate the rhetorical flavor of their Latin originals.<sup>1</sup>

Dafydd ap Gwilym would have us believe he knew his Ovid; and we might single out a reference or two here for brief comment.

Prydydd cerdd Ofydd ddifai,  
Primas mwyn prif urddas Mai.  
(GDG 28, ll. 21-22)

(Trans: Poet of the faultless song of Ovid, gentle master of May's peerless dignity.)

<sup>1</sup>J. E. Caerwyn Williams recognizes that Welsh translations of religious writings follow their originals closely, and accepts Curtius' judgment that "the lesson of the Middle Ages is reverent reception and faithful transmission of a precious deposit" as applicable to this sphere of Welsh literary activity, p. 78, quoting Curtius, p. 597.

A reference to Ovid's eloquence; "Ovid's speech:"

araith Ofydd  
(GDG 6, l. 16)

Or, consider the following lines which concentrate on poetic form:

Cywair ddelw, cywir ddolef,  
Cywydd gwiw Ofydd. . . .  
(GDG 148, ll. 7-8)

(Trans: Harmonious form, correct plaint, Ovid's excellent cywydd.)

Ovid's reputation and influence were substantial in the Middle Ages. Admired as a stylist and for his wonderful gift of form by Dante and Chaucer,<sup>1</sup> both contemporaries of Dafydd's, Ovid is almost certainly here recognized by Dafydd for his mastery of language and form, though, to be sure, the majority of Dafydd's references to Ovid regard him as a love poet primarily.

We do not really know whether or not Dafydd read Ovid, despite his references to llyfr Ofydd, nor which work he had in mind. Michael Lapidge's research, which we referred to earlier, suggests that the Metamorphoses, Ex Ponto, and the Ars Amatoria were current in manuscript form in eleventh-century Wales, although we have no evidence of their survival into the fourteenth century. Nor is there any direct evidence to suggest that Dafydd had a clerical training.<sup>2</sup> It involves a similar leap to assume that his uncle Llywelyn was more Norman than Welsh, particularly as more and more ~~uncle Llywelyn was more Norman than Welsh, particularly as more and more~~ modern historical investigation reveals the complexity of political ~~attitudes~~

<sup>1</sup>Dante and Chaucer were not, obviously, the only men who so esteemed Ovid, but references to them are handy. Dante, for instance, ranks him after Virgil and Horace in Book IV of the Inferno, while Chaucer assigns him a poetic pillar in Book III of The House of Fame.

<sup>2</sup>Dafydd's pose as a man in orders is one of the stereotypes of medieval love poetry, as a quick look through the troubadours will indicate.



adopted by the Welsh petty gentry and those in service to the Crown. Nor do we know that Dafydd sat in Emlyn Castle reading French love poetry, though it is possible that he did. I suppose none of these is impossible, but some things are more probable than others. What is probable, and what the following examination will show, is that somewhere Dafydd picked up at least a rudimentary knowledge of rhetorical techniques. Not only Dafydd, but Iolo Goch and Rhys Goch Eryri as well. Dafydd's and Iolo's works, in particular, show a range of rhetorical application: some poems seem clearly to be deliberate and informed efforts in their use of tropes and colores. Many of them, too, reveal a certain unity of composition more typical of Mediterranean efforts than the native Welsh shorter units of composition - the line, the couplet, the stanza, as H. I. Bell explains it.<sup>1</sup> Certain motifs and topoi, too, appear in both Dafydd's and Iolo's work. These can best be understood in the light of popular medieval practice both existing as part of that continuous literary tradition stretching from classical antiquity. The eulogistic and elegiac verse is particularly remarkable for certain stylistic mannerisms which are rooted in medieval rhetorical practice. By isolating and naming some of the literary phenomena in the works of the medieval Welsh poets we can, in Curtius' view, establish a fact. And, "at that one point we have penetrated the concrete structure of the matter of literature. We have performed an analysis."<sup>2</sup> Once a fact is established perhaps others will follow, and from these connecting lines hopefully we produce a clearer,

<sup>1</sup>H. I. Bell, The Development of Welsh Poetry (Oxford, 1936), p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Curtius, p. 382.

more comprehensive picture of Welsh medieval poetry and its position in the cultural stream of the Middle Ages.

The following account cannot, however, be exhaustive for obvious reasons of space and purpose - the purpose being mainly to establish the more widely "medieval" nature of much of Welsh poetry. Nor should the following be regarded as a polemic, though it may appear at times to be an argument in favor of classical borrowings. The examples of rhetorical exercises have necessarily been taken out of the larger context of the poem and are meant to illustrate that in their making of living poems the Welsh bards used literary devices that were certainly as "European" and as much grounded in the classical past as were others well grounded in their native past. What we probably have here is not exclusive traditions at work, but the blend of native and foreign.

The question regarding outside influences has long attracted scholars. Chotzen, writing in 1927, felt that Welsh bards of the fourteenth century would have been loathe to borrow ideas or forms from foreigners, though he apparently would have allowed an oral tradition of influence.<sup>1</sup> Rachel Bromwich presents a strong argument for Welsh acquaintance with the Roman de la Rose.<sup>2</sup> Chotzen, too, believed that paraphrases of Ovid, in French, and of the Roman de la Rose were known. If these indeed were known, the possibility of a deliberate imitation of the rhetorical devices in them becomes arguably stronger. However, the question of how intentionally the bards chose rhetorical topics and devices is difficult to answer, but one that is well worth considering.

<sup>1</sup>Recherches sur la Poesie de Dafydd ap Gwilym, pp. 144-148.

<sup>2</sup>Tradition and Innovation . . ., p. 49.

RHETORICAL DEVICES IN THE WORK OF  
DAFYDD AP GWILYM AND THE CYWYDDWYR

Of the two styles considered appropriate for effective development of a theme, amplificatio was the most highly prized by medieval poetic theorists.<sup>1</sup> Amplification, the ingenious and elaborate drawing out of the subject, received considerably more attention than abbreviatio, which received slight treatment by the theorists and played little part in poetic practice. The means of amplifying a work or passage generally included eight forms of rhetorical ornamentation.<sup>2</sup> Into this "amplified" style, a poet could weave the colores which we know commonly as "figures of speech" and "figures of thought." Common to the amplified style was

<sup>1</sup>The standard treatment of medieval rhetorical theory is E. Faral's Les Arts Poétiques du XII<sup>e</sup> et du XIII<sup>e</sup> Siècle (Paris, 1924) in which he provides both an analytical commentary and review of the major theorists: Matthew of Vendôme, Geoffrey of Vinsauf, John of Garland, and others, as well as the edited texts of Matthew of Vendôme's Ars versificatoria, Geoffrey's Poetria Nova and Documentum de Modo et Arte Dictandi et Versificandi, which are the texts we will refer to here. All references to Matthew will be abbreviated to Ars, and those to Geoffrey's texts will be: Poetria and Documentum. Faral himself explains amplification as "L'amplification est la grande chose; elle est la principale fonction de l'écrivain" (p. 62). In his discussion of medieval style, he provides informative references to Cicero, Cornificius, Horace, and numerous other writers held in high repute during the Middle Ages and whose works exerted an influence on medieval writers. The extent to which amplificatio dominated the two stylistic principles is evident in the space accorded it by Geoffrey in his Poetria: ll. 219-689 deal with amplificatio, while abbreviatio is accorded only ll. 690-736. This ratio is typical of medieval rhetorical manuals.

<sup>2</sup>They are: interpretatio, circumlocutio, comparatio, apostrophatio, prosopopoeia, digressio, descriptio and oppositio. We shall not be treating all of these nor all of the colores (there are 64) since to do so would require several hundred pages. As each device is singled out for review, a definition will be provided.

the use of metaphor in ten different dresses. These were regarded as ornatus difficilis, known to us as "tropes," the figures themselves based primarily upon the idea or concept behind the verbal expression rather than on the form or use of the word itself. We will remark upon the precise nature of each as we examine their appearance in the poetry.

Amplification and the parola ornata evidently appealed to the Welsh bards.<sup>1</sup> We accordingly find in their work a partiality for some of the means of amplification: circuitio,<sup>2</sup> prosopopoeia and descriptio, most prominently; while Dafydd ap Gwilym makes successful use of interpretatio and apostrophe also.

Circuitio (sometimes called periphrasis, or circumlocutio) is the very essence of poetic expression; it involves taking a line, a phrase,

<sup>1</sup>D. M. Lloyd makes this point in "Estheteg yr Oesoedd Canol," Llên Cymru, I, rhifyn 3 (Jan. 1951), pp. 153-168 where he suggests that this antique and foreign conception of style would naturally appeal to the Celts, and he adds that it strengthened the native tradition when it merged with it (p. 164).

<sup>2</sup>In the same article, Lloyd contends that several rhetorical figures appear in the work of the Gogynfeirdd: namely, circuitio, which he sees "dotted through" their verse, antithesis, oxymoron, and onomatopoeia, particularly in the verse of Hywel ab Owain and Prydydd y Moch. I think that there is sufficient justification in Lloyd's conclusions, and a full examination of this poetry for evidence of rhetorical techniques would be a valuable addition to the scholarship of the period. It would clearly advance historical criticism and help in establishing the nature of the affinities between the Gogynfeirdd and cywyddwyr.

or several, to say what could be said in a word or two.<sup>1</sup> Circuitio was one of the principal and most popular means of amplifying a passage and of insuring a high stylistic level of expression.

Circuitio was commonly used in references to time. Virgil, for instance, was particularly fond of using periphrastic expressions to amplify temporal references. Instead of the straightforward, "night will fall," he says:

Ante diem clauso componet Vesper Olympo  
(Aeneid, I, 374)

Geoffrey in his Documentum (II, 2, 11) cites as an example of circumlocutio the opening lines of the Aeneid,<sup>2</sup> explaining that they say nothing more than "I will describe Aeneas." Dante's work supplies numerous examples,<sup>3</sup> as does Chaucer's. In his Troilus and Criseyde, Chaucer thus expresses the passing of three years:

<sup>1</sup>Geoffrey's advice in the Poetria:

Longius ut sit opus ne ponas nomina rerum.  
Pone notas alias: nec plane detege, sed rem  
Innue per notulas, nec sermo perambulet in re,  
Sed rem circuiens longis ambagibus ambi  
Quod breviter dicturus eras. . . .  
(ll. 229ff; Faral, p. 204)

(Trans: In order to amplify the work, avoid calling things by their names; use other designations for them; do not unveil the thing fully but suggest it by hints; nor let your words move straight forward through your subject, but take a circular and long path around what you were going to say briefly.)

<sup>2</sup>Arma virumque cano Trojae qui primus ab oris  
Italiam fato profugus Laviniaque venit  
litora. (Aeneid, I, 1)

Quoted from Geoffrey's Documentum (II, 2, 11) in Faral, p. 273.

<sup>3</sup>Curtius has a lengthy catalogue of Dante's circumlocutions for time in fn. 5, p. 276, and for geographical and astronomical periphrases on p. 277, fns. 11, 12, 13.

The gold-ytressed Phebus heighe on-lofte  
 Thries hadde alle with his bemes clene  
 The snowes molte, and Zepherus as ofte  
 Ibrought ayeyn the tendre leves grene.  
 (V, 8-11)

Elsewhere he pokes fun at such periphrastic expressions, slyly commenting on his own usage:

Til that the brighte sonne lost his hewe,  
 For th'orisonte hath reft the sonne his lyght,  
 This is as much to seye as it was nyght!  
 (Franklin's Tale, 1016-1018)

One might compare medieval Latin poetic practice, for example, Angilbert's circumlocution on dawn:

Aurora cum primo mane tetram noctem dividit.<sup>1</sup>

Or, Hrabanus Maurus' reference to the passing of time:

Ante solum terrae caelique volubile cyclum  
 praetereant. . . .<sup>2</sup>

Dafydd ap Gwilym and his contemporaries also made use of this figure. Thus Dafydd amplifies the idea, "I had a dream at dawn," to: "I saw at the streak of daybreak, a dream on the brow of morning:"

Gwelais ar glais dichlais dydd  
 Breuddwyd yn ael boreddydd.  
 (GDG 39, 3-4)

And, for "on May Day," we find:

Dyw Calan mis mwynlan Mai,  
 (GDG 23, 4)

<sup>1</sup>Helen Waddell, ed. and trans., Medieval Latin Lyrics (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1968), p. 112. Her translation: When the dawn at early morning drove the sullen night away " (p. 113).

<sup>2</sup>Waddell, p. 120. Her translation: Earth's self shall go and the swift wheel of heaven perish and pass. . . ." (p. 121).

"The first day of the mild fair month of May." Note, too, that he separates Calan from Mai to achieve the periphrasis. When describing the owl's incessant clamor that keeps him awake at night, Dafydd expands his basic meaning - I can't sleep because of the wretched owl's nightly noise - to a six-line circumlocution:

Truan i'r dylluan deg  
Oer ddistal na rydd osteg.  
Ni ad ym ganu 'mhader,  
Ni thau tra fo siamplau sêr.  
Ni chaf (och o'r gwarafun)  
Gysgu na heddychu hun.  
(GDG 26, 1-6)

(Trans: A wretch is the fine owl, cold and worthless, who gives no peace. She does not allow me to sing my pater, she's not silent while the stars are out. I'll not get (oh, forbidden) sleep nor peaceful sleep.)

Here we find several rhetorical devices used for amplification and emphasis. Tra fo siamplau sêr is a circumlocution for "at night," while five of the lines (*i. e.*, ll. 2-6) quite simply reduce to "she won't let me sleep." Synonymic repetition, called interpretatio, occurs in the use of cysgu and heddychu hun, while a certain amount of irony, simulatio, is almost certainly present in teg.

Consider, also, Dafydd's exaggerated statement of his sleepless state in Campau Bun (GDG 56). Instead of saying "I was up all week," Dafydd embellishes the idea: "The ashes went eight times over the top of the hearth:"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>A reference to the habit of covering the fire with ashes for the night. With Dafydd's line, compare Bernart de Ventadorn's:

Tota noih me vir' e.m lansa  
desobre l'esponda.

("The whole night long I toss and turn on the edge of the bed," pp. 132-133, ll. 43-44 in Frederick Goldin, ed. and trans., Lyrics of the Troubadours and Trouvères (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1973 ).



Aeth ulw dros frig wyth aelwyd  
(GDG 56, 3)

Circuitio has a variety of applications, and, when used effectively, can make the mundane poetic. It is also particularly effective in the coining of epithets, and as such is used very successfully in some of the Welsh poetry, often in connection with the native dyfalu, which is essentially a device of amplification.<sup>1</sup>

We might first look at some examples from Chaucer. Rather than baldly stating that Criseyde lied, he calls her lie "a word with two visages" (Tr. & Cr., V, 899), and when telling us that Hector died, he explains that "he caught his lyves ende" (Tr. & Cr., V, 1554). In The Romaunt of the Rose rather than say "mortal," Chaucer has "man that myghte dye" (676). In the Troilus he combines circuitio with metaphoric epithet. Thus the cock is the "commune astrologer" (III, 1415) and the morning star is "Lucyfer, the dayes messenger" (III, 1417).

Dafydd ap Gwilym, in a similar spirit, prefers to call a monk a "tonsured man:"

ŵr â chorun  
(GDG 35, 10)

Or, instead of simply saying "nobody," he takes a line to say:

Nad byw'r Cristion credadun  
(GDG 51, 37)

(Trans: "There is not a believing Christian alive.")

<sup>1</sup>See D. J. Bowen's fine discussion of amplification and dyfalu in the work of Dafydd in "Dafydd ap Gwilym a Datblygiad y Cywydd," op. cit., especially pp. 24-27.



Gruffudd Llwyd relies heavily on circuitio as he describes the sun in I Ddanfon yr Haul i Annerch Morgannwg (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 144). Among the epithets for sun he uses are the following: "fairest planet" (teca' planed; 144, 3); "Sunday's name" (Sul enw; 144, 5); and "excellent light" (ddisalw oleuni; 144, 5), all within three lines. He likewise expands the idea of the sun's course by saying "a long journey is your voyage, from the East. . . to the West" (Siwrnai faith yw dy daith di,/ O ddwyrain. . . ,/ i'r gorllewin; 144, 6-8).

The series of descriptive comparisons in Y Niwl (DGG XXXIX, 1935 ed., and now rejected by Parry as Dafydd's work) must stand as one of the most dynamic amplifications of an image in medieval Welsh verse. Thus the mist is "a cloudy mantling [which] made the road dark"<sup>1</sup> (Tywyllawdd wybr fantellau/ Y ffordd; DGG 62, ll. 7-8); it is a "chasuble of grey-black air" (casul o'r awyr ddulwyd; 63, 17); an "endless sheet" (carthen anniben; 63, 18); a "spider's web" (adargopwe; 63, 25); and "an insubstantial flying sorcerer"<sup>2</sup> (hudol gwan yn ehedeg; 63, 39).

Less arresting examples from the cywyddwyr are many, and scarcely require discussion, though I might mention two, both from anonymous poems. First, Mab Mair, "son of Mary" (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 97, 20), is a fairly routine circumlocution for Christ. In another poem we find dros ben ac ar draws y byd ("above and across the world;" IGE<sup>2</sup>. 93, 6) for "worldwide."

Interpretatio, another means of amplification, is achieved by presenting the same idea in different ways, often by means of a series of synonyms

<sup>1</sup>Quoting Professor Jackson's translation of the phrase, from his Celtic Miscellany (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1971), p. 78.

<sup>2</sup>Again, Professor Jackson's translation, p. 78, op. cit.

which elaborate upon the single basic idea.<sup>1</sup> The main object of interpretatio is emphasis through dilation.<sup>2</sup> Thus Chaucer in a brief parallel series refers to Theseus in the Knight's Tale as: "This Theseus, this duc, this worthy knight" (I, 2190).

Arnaut Daniel centers on the song of the birds in a series of verbal variations. Accordingly, the songs are "sweet trills and calls, lays and songs and refrains:"

Doutz brais e critz,  
Lais e cantars e voutas.<sup>3</sup>  
(I, 1-2)

Bertran de Born stresses his grief for the young English king in an elaborate interpretatio which accumulates words of sorrow and misery:

<sup>1</sup>Geoffrey's instructions from his Poetria (ll. 219ff; Faral, p. 204):

Si facis amplum,  
Hoc primo procede gradu: sententia cum sit  
Unica, non uno veniat contenta paratu,  
Sed variet vestes et mutatoria sumat;  
Sub verbis aliis praesumpta resume; repone  
Pluribus in clausis unum; multiplice forma  
Dissimuletur idem; varius sis et tamen idem.

(Trans: If you choose an amplified form proceed first of all by this step: although the meaning is one, let it not come content with one set of apparel. Let it vary its robes and assume different raiment. Take up again in other words what has already been said; reiterate, in a number of clauses, a single thought. Let one and the same thing be concealed under a multiple form - be varied and yet the same.)

<sup>2</sup>Roger Dragonetti in La Technique Poetique des Trouvères dans la Chanson Courtoise (Brugge: De Tempel, 1960) surveys examples of interpretatio in the work of the trouvères on pages 288-291. Some representative examples include: ma joi et mes depors ("my joy and my disport"); ma plainte et ma clamor ("my complaint and my outcry"); there are many more catalogued by Dragonetti.

<sup>3</sup>Arnaut Daniel, I, in Alan R. Press, ed. and trans., Anthology of Troubadour Lyric Poetry (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971).

Si tuit li dol e.lh plor e.lh marrimen  
 E las dolors e.lh dan e.lh chaitivier  
 Qu'om anc auzis en est segle dolen  
 Fossen ensem, sembleran tot leugier  
 Contra la mort del jove rei engles,  
 Don rema Pretz e Jovens doloros,  
 E.l mons obscurs e teintz e tenebros,  
 Sems de tot joi, ples de tristor e d'ira<sup>1</sup>  
 (VI, 1-8)

I have given the first stanza only, though each subsequent stanza plays heavily on the words dolen ("grieving"), trist ("sad"), dol et ira ("grief and sorrow"), and the like.

The cywyddwyr put interpretatio to much the same use, either extending it over a series of lines so that it forms a homogenous narrative passage, or using it phrasally in more easily isolatable units. For an example of the first method we might turn to Dayfydd ap Gwilym's Y Ceiliog Bronfraith in which five consecutive lines are virtually built on this ornament. I underscore the synonymic repetition.

Pob llais diwael yn ael nant  
 A gân ef o'i gu nwyfiant,  
 Pob caniad mad mydr angerdd,  
 Pob cainc o'r organ, pob cerdd,  
 Pob cwlm addwyn er mwyn merch.  
 (GDG 28, 13-17)

(Trans: Each excellent sound on the brow of the glen, he sings with his dear vivacity, each goodly song with passionate poetry [lit., "metre"], each organ tune, each poem, each fine strain for the sake of a girl.)

<sup>1</sup>In Press, pp. 168-171. His translation: "If all the grief, the tears, and the distress, the suffering, the pain, and the misery which one had ever heard of in this grievous life were put together, they would all seem slight compared with the death of the young English king, for which Merit and Youth are left grieving, and the world dark and sombre and gloomy, empty of all joy, full of sadness and sorrow." The young King is Henry II's<sup>s</sup> eldest son, Henry.

In fact, the entire poem is an elaboration on the ideas set forth in these lines. Dafydd repeatedly stresses, through variation, the bird's song. Thus "his pleasant sonority" of line 1 (serchog ei sôn) is described as "fair bright language" in line 3 (deg loywiaith), as "whistling" in line 6 (chwibaniad), and as "his cry. . . and his bright shout" in line 10 (ei lef . . . a'i loyw floedd). The same impulse is found in the epithets he accords the bird:

Pencerdd gloyw angerdd  
(12)

Prydydd  
(21)

Awdur cerdd  
(24)

(Trans: "ardent bright chief-poet," "bard," and "author of song," respectively.)

Iolo Goch uses interpretatio effectively in order to achieve emotional emphasis in Marwnad Tudur Fychan (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 12). He introduces the "trumpet's note, hollow and straying" in the second line: Canu corn cyfeiliorn cau, and returns to it in line 5: galargyrn ("horns of grief").

Chaucer, likewise, wishing to emphasize the clamor in The House of Fame, does so by a synonymic series:

Of hem that maken blody soun  
In trumpe, beme,<sup>1</sup> and claryoun.  
(1239-40)

<sup>1</sup>  
beme: trumpet

This enumerative force occurs also in Iolo Goch's Moliant i Bedwar Maib Tudur o Fôn (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 15) as he calls Tudur's sons cynheiliaid deucan aelwyd; ("supporters of two hundred hearts"; cangau llyrf ("branches' support;" 25), and colofnau ("pillars;" 26).

Marwnad Gruffud ab Adda (GDG 18) closes with a twelve-line passage built on interpretatio:

Diriaid i'w gân ei daraw,  
Dewr o lid, â dur i'w law,  
Arf a roes, eirioes orofn,  
Ar fy mrawd gleddyfawd ddofn,  
Trwy fanwallt gwalch o falchlin,  
Och fi, ddäed awch ei fin!  
Triawch y cledd (pand truan?)  
Trwy felynflew dyn glew glân.  
Trawiad un lladdiad â llif,  
Toriad hagr trwy iad digrif,  
Dig wyf, un doriad â gŵydd,  
Deuddryll, pond oedd wladeiddrwydd?  
(37-48)

(Trans: It was villainous of his kinsman to strike him, [made] bold in anger, with steel in his hand. He put his weapon, a coward by nature, into my brother, deep sword-stroke, through the fine hair of the hawk of proud lineage, oh, me, good and sharp its edge! The three-edged sword (is it not wretched?) went through the yellow hair of the brave bright man. One cutting stroke like a saw, an ugly gash through the fair head, one stroke, like cutting a goose's<sup>1</sup> skull into two pieces; I am enraged, was it not boorish?)

Here, then, Dafydd develops his theme by using different words and images which mean roughly the same thing. Several sets emerge: ei daraw (37),

<sup>1</sup>Parry explains line 47 on page 460. I have incorporated his explanation, as far as it helps the sense of the passage, into my translation.

the striking of Gruffudd is more particularized in the repetition of the idea in gleddyfawd (40), and this is carried forward in toriad hagr (46). Attention is drawn to the head: manwallt (41; "fine hair"), melynflow (44; "yellow hair"), iad digrif (46; "charming head"). Intertwined with these are the repeated interpolations referring to the sword: dur (38; "steel"), arf (39; "weapon" or "blade"), awch (42; "edge"), trïawch y cledd (43; "three-edged sword") and finally in a savage image: llif (45; a "saw"), the boorishness of this idea emphasized in the concluding two lines which compare Gruffudd's slaughter to that of goose, making the action *butchery*.

Gruffudd ab Adda himself made skilful use of interpretatio in Lleidr Serch,<sup>1</sup> modelling half of his cywydd on it, and dressing it up further with other colores.

Nid wyf leidr ar daflawdwŷdd  
 Yn gochlyd tywyn-bryd dydd:  
 Lleidr wyf, mae clwyf i'm clymu,  
 Lleidr merch deg, nid lleidr march du;  
 Nid lleidr myharen heno,  
 Lleidr meinwen drwy ddien dro;  
 Nid lleidr buarth gwartheg,  
 Lleidr hon, wedd ton, dan wŷdd teg;  
 Lleidr eres hudoles hy,  
 Lleidr poendaith, nid lleidr pandy;  
 Lleidr dirrwyn morwyn nid mau,  
 Lleidr purserch, nid lleidr pyrsau;  
 Nid wyf leidr un llwdn carnawl,  
 Arnaf ni bu hwyaf hawl:  
 Lledrad gariad a'm gorwyf  
 Lleidryn, boen efyn, bun wyf.  
 (17-32)

(Trans: I am not a thief on the plank of a loft avoiding day's shining face; I am a thief (a wound binds me), thief of a beautiful girl, not a thief of a black stallion; I am not a thief of a ram tonight, [but] a

<sup>1</sup>In Ifor Williams and Thomas Roberts, eds., Cywyddau Dafydd ap Gwilym a'i Gyfoeswyr (Bangor, 1935), pp. 115-116.

thief<sup>of a</sup> a slender, fair girl for a pleasant while; I am not a thief of a cattle pen, [but] a thief of this one, wave-colored, under the fair trees, thief of a strange bold enchantress, thief of a painful journey, not a thief of a fulling-mill; tormented thief of a maiden who is not mine, thief of pure love, not a thief of purses; I am not a thief of a young hoofed beast, there was not a longer claim against me: it is thievish love that impels me; fetter of pain, I am the thief of a girl.)

These sixteen lines are but an amplified way of saying: "I am not a petty pilferer, but a thief of a more valuable prize - a girl's love." The negative-positive series uses oppositio,<sup>1</sup> the process of denial and affirmation set forth

<sup>1</sup>This device is used by Bertan de Born, for example, to underscore the differences he sees among the nobility he favors and the nobility he despises. Thus:

Ges no.m platz de nostres baros  
Qu'an fachs sagramens, no sai quaus. . . .

Bela m'es pressa de blezos  
Cobertz de teintz vermelhs e blaus,  
D'entresenhs e de gonfanos  
De diversas color treta. . . .

No.m platz companha de basclos,  
Ni de las putanas venaus;  
Sacs d'esterlis e de moutos  
M'es laitz. . . .

Bo.m sap l'usatge qu'a.l lëos. . . .

(Trans: I'm not pleased at all by our barons who have sworn I know not what oaths. . . . Pleasant to me is a throng of shields covered in blue and scarlet hues, of ensigns and banners likewise of varying colours. . . . The company of brigands pleases me not, nor that of venal whores; bags of sterling and French silver repel me. . . . The lion's custom appeals to me. . . .) Text and translation from the Press anthology, op. cit., pp. 166-167.

Chaucer, too, uses both interpretatio and oppositio within the same passage as he describes the fight between the hosts of Arcite and Palamon in the Knight's Tale.

In goon the speres ful sadly in arrest;  
In gooth the sharpe spore into the syde. . . .  
Up spryngen speres twenty foot on highte;  
Out goon the swerdes as the silver brighte;  
The helmes they tohewen and toshrede;  
Out brest the blood with stierne stremes rede.

(2602-2610)

Here the oppositio is achieved by contrasting the in goon of the first two lines with the out in the final lines.

in the formula "It is not this, but that." And, by using repetitio, repeating a word or phrase at the beginning of several lines of verses or clauses, Gruffudd ab Adda adds emphasis and a certain gravity. Interpretatio is also seen in his synonymous variations in metaphor for "girl" in the above passage:

merch deg ("beautiful girl;" l. 20)  
meinwen ("slender fair girl;" l. 22)  
hon, wedd ton ("this one, wave colored;" l. 24)  
eres hudoles hy ("strange bold enchantress;" l. 25)  
morwyn nid mau ("a maiden who is not mine;" l. 27)  
bun ("a girl;" l. 32)

In Iolo Goch's encomiastic cywydd I Ieuan, Esgob Llanelwy (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 85) a similar series of synonymous variations built on interpretatio occurs in the space of a few sequential clauses:

pennaeth ("chief;" p. 85, l. 6)  
nen ("roof;" p. 85, l. 7)  
arglwydd ("lord;" p. 85, l. 9)  
nêr ("lord;" p. 85, l. 11)

These stand out clearly as synonyms among the descriptive epithets and appellatives catalogued in the poem.

Perhaps the most noteworthy examples of amplification in the works of the Welsh bards are found in their descriptive passages. So agile is their use of description that the Welsh poetic use of this device, especially when at its best, must rank among the most effective and graphic produced by medieval poets. And in their prolific use of descriptive phrases, epithets and compounds, the Welsh poets are working within a native



tradition - this is most clearly seen in their martial epithets and geographical descriptions, especially in their elegies and praise poetry. But frequently in the newer "lyric" verse, description takes on a less native form.<sup>1</sup>

Medieval rhetorical descriptions (descriptio) as set forth in the manuals, and evinced abundantly in the poetry, covered a wide field and included highly conventionalized treatment of persons, objects and scenes.<sup>2</sup> We will here deal with the descriptive portrait of a woman, concentrating on Iolo Goch's I Ferch (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 3) which is a salient example in Welsh of the formal portrait as presented in medieval poetic doctrine. In all statements on how to describe a woman, a clearly prescribed order is established: one begins with the head and concludes with the feet,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>To be sure, description of women and the amatory element are present in some of the Gogynfeirdd verse, notably in Hywel ab Owain and Llywarch ap Llywelyn, and gave rise to a new form, the rhieingerdd, about which there is still speculation regarding the influence of the Troubadours. But as we move into the fourteenth century, the thematic treatment of war sharpening love, of both love and war conflated with themes of nature poetry gives way. It is possible, too, that romance descriptions may have influenced poetic practice; nor can the role of amor courtois and Troubadour influence be discounted, although conjectural.

<sup>2</sup>Rhetorical prescriptions and models for descriptions of these (descriptio personae, descriptio temporis and descriptio loci) were accorded a prominent place in the medieval arts poétiques. They are discussed by Faral, pp. 75-84, and treated at length by Matthew (I, 41-118). Geoffrey's analysis is devoted mainly to descriptions of persons (Poetria, ll. 554-667; Documentum, II, 2-10), while earlier statements on this technique can be found in Cicero, De Inventione, I, 24-25, Cornificius, Quintilian, and Priscian.

<sup>3</sup>Faral notes, as have others, that Bernard in his De universitate mundi, expresses the current idea that Nature, following God's design, thus framed man beginning with the head and ending with the feet (p. 81).

detailing the face, hair, forehead, eyebrows, eyes, cheeks, nose, mouth, teeth, neck, shoulders, arms, chest, figure, legs, feet. This can, if the poet chooses, be followed by details of dress. This mode of physical description was known as effectio, the description of the outward appearance. The theorists also suggested that the subject be accorded a description of her (or his) moral qualities, this device known as notatio, though in practice the moral characteristics were most often neglected or only alluded to. So noteworthy is Iolo Goch's description of the girl in I Ferch in its resemblance to the rhetorical models that it will be instructive to cite the relevant passage in Geoffrey.

Femineum plene si vis formare decorum,  
 Praeformet capiti Naturae circinus orbem;  
 Crinibus irrutilet color auri; lilia vernent  
 565 In specula frontis; vaccinia nigra coaequet  
 Forma supercilii; geminos intersecet arcus  
 Lactea forma viae; castiget regula nasi  
 Ductum, ne citra sistat vel transeat aequum;  
 Excubiae frontis, radiant utrimque gemelli  
 570 Luce smaragdina vel sideris instar ocelli;  
 Aemula sit facies Aurorae, nec rubicundae  
 Nec nitidae, sed utroque simul neutroque colore.  
 Splendeat os forma spatii brevis et quasi cycli  
 Dimidii; tanquam praegnantia labra tumore  
 575 Surgant, sed modico rutilent, ignita, sed igne  
 Mansueto; dentes niveos compagnet ordo,  
 Omnes unius staturae; thuris et oris  
 Sit pariter conditus odor; mentumque polito  
 Marmore plus poliat Natura potentio arte.  
 580 Succuba sit capitis pretiosa colore columna  
 Lactea, quae speculum vultus supportet in altum.  
 Ex cristallino procedat gutture quidam  
 Splendor, qui possit oculos referire videntis  
 Et cor furari. Quadam se lege coaptent  
 585 Ne jaceant quasi descendant, ne stent quasi surgant  
 Sed recti sedeant humeri; placeantque pacerti,  
 Tam forma gracili quam longa deliciosi.  
 Confluat in tenues digitos substantia mollis  
 Et macra, forma teres et lactea, linea long  
 590 Et directa : decor mannum se jactet in illis.  
 Pectus, imago nivis, quasi quasdam collaterales  
 Gemmas virgineas producat utrimque papillas.

595

Sit locus astrictus zonae, brevitae pugilli  
 Circumscripibilis. Taceo de partibus infra:  
 Aptius hic loquitur animus quam lingua. Sed opsa  
 Tibia se gracilem protendat; pes brevitatis  
 Eximiae brevitae sua lasciviat. . . .

(*Poetria*; Faral, pp. 214-5)

(Trans: If you wish to describe, in amplified form, a woman's beauty: Let the compass of Nature first fashion a sphere for her head; let the color of gold show red in her hair and lilies bloom high on her brow. Let her eyebrows resemble in dark beauty the blackberry, and a lovely and milkwhite path separate their twin arches. Let her nose be straight, of moderate length, not too short nor too long for perfection. Let her eyes, those watch-fires of her brow, be radiant with emerald light, or with the brightness of stars. Let her countenance emulate dawn, not red, nor yet white - but at once neither of those colors and both. Let her mouth be bright, small in shape - as it were, a half-circle. Let her lips be rounded and full, but moderately so; let them glow, aflame, but with gentle fire. Let her teeth be snowy, regular, all of one size, and her breath like the fragrance of incense. Smoother than polished marble let Nature fashion her chin - Nature, so potent a sculptor. Let her neck be a precious column of milk-white beauty, holding high the perfection of her countenance. From her crystal throat let radiance gleam, to enchant the eye of the viewer and enslave his heart. Let her shoulders, conforming to beauty's law, not slope in unlovely descent nor jut out with awkward rise; rather, let them be gracefully straight. Let her arms be a joy to behold, charming in their grace and their length. Let soft and slim loveliness, a form shapely and white, a line long and straight, flow into her slender fingers. Let her beautiful hands take pride in those fingers. Let her breast, the image of snow, show side by side its twin virginal gems. Let her waist be close girt, and so slim that a hand may encircle it. For the other parts I am silent - here the mind's speech is more apt than the tongue's. Let her leg be of graceful length and her wonderfully tiny foot dance with joy at its smallness.<sup>1</sup>

In the following passage Geoffrey describes how this portrait may be amplified, adding "to the loveliness thus pictured" by describing the girl's apparel: "Let the border of her robe gleam with fine linen; with gold let her mantle blaze. . . . Have gold encircle her slender fingers. . . . Let artistry vie with materials in her fair attire."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Translation by Margaret F. Nims, *Poetria Nova of Geoffrey of Vinsauf* (Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies; Canada, 1967), pp. 36-37.

<sup>2</sup>*Poetria*, ll. 604-611; trans. Nims, p. 37; Faral, pp. 215-216.

Iolo Goch, after completing the formal portrait of the girl, in fact, does add a description of her attire which would satisfy Geoffrey's requirements. But first, the description of the girl. Roughly, the first twenty lines are introductory and anticipatory and fulfill the same function as the opening lines in Matthew of Vendôme's famous description of Helen.<sup>1</sup> The description proper runs from line 21 on to the end of the poem, excluding the final two couplets which provide in an epilogue the tribute (really, attribution) to God which ordinarily prefaces the portrait. Nevertheless, this rearrangement must certainly have been acceptable as would have been the few inversions of facial details since Iolo correctly follows the major organization moving from head to foot.

The first couplet of the description:

Tâl ag aur mâl gorau mold,  
Brialluwallt bre lliwold.  
(21-22)

"Forehead of wrought gold of best mould, primrose hair a golden hill." While Iolo has paralleled Geoffrey's usage (and Matthew's) in the gold of the girl's hair, he does not describe her brow in terms of its lily whiteness. This infrequency of lilies in Welsh descriptio pulchritudinis will be commented on in a later section.

Next Iolo describes the girl's eyebrows as du ael (24), "dark eyebrows," and her eyes as: Llygad fal glain caead coeth (25) - "Eyes like

<sup>1</sup>Ars Versificatoria, I. 56 in Faral, p. 129: "The elegance of Tyndareus' daughter, the blossom of her beauty, the glory of her face have bankrupted the gifts of Nature the Creator. Her beauty, so generously lovely, gleaming with starry grace, scorns a merely human appearance. Her form is peerless. . . ."

a fine brooch's jewel". Both descriptions bear comparison with Geoffrey's - the black beauty of the brows and the jeweled light of the eyes. Iolo's description of the girl's nose follows: Gwyndrwyn cyfladdgrwn (28): "Neat and shapely white nose." Her lips are pleasingly lovely and comely: min/ Digrifwypm diagr (4, 2), while her little teeth are like fine gems: A deintws mwyndlw (4, 1). Her complexion combines both white and red; both images drawn from the native tradition and here effectively applied in a foreign schema:

Cwrelrudd criawalryw  
(3, 2)  
"Coral-red like rowan berries"

Lliw eira bas ar lasgraig  
(3, 11)  
"Hue of shallow snow on a grey rock"

Further references to her whiteness appear in l. 7; and on p. 4. 14, 16; references to red on p. 3, 14; to red and white in combination: p. 4. 23-24. The rest of the description is equally well-ordered and the details are certainly in accord with medieval poetic practice. Thus:

<u>chin</u>	<u>elgethloyw</u> (3, 5) "with radiant chin" cf. Geoffrey's "smoother than polished marble."
<u>throat</u>	<u>Tagell hir, teg oll ei himp</u> (4, 3) "long throat, wholly fair its sprout[ing]"
<u>flanks</u>	<u>Ystlyslun dwywes dlosleddf</u> (4, 11) "the form of her flanks like those of a goddess, beautiful and smooth"
<u>arms/breast</u>	<u>A bron afaldwf a braich</u> (4, 6) "breasts, round like apples, and arms"
<u>figure</u>	<u>Cogeilgorff</u> (3, 8) "with body like a distaff"
	<u>Brwynengorff</u> (3, 10) "rush-like body"

<u>fingers</u>	<u>bys hoywlary teg</u> <u>Ewin ballasarn arnaw</u> (4, 7-8) "fingers quick, gentle, and fair with pink nails on them"
<u>hands</u>	<u>Llaw fain fal lliw y faneg</u> (4, 7) "A slender hand of glove-like hue"
<u>breast</u>	<u>A bron afaldwf</u> (4, 6) <sup>1</sup> "apple-round breast"

Iolo does not single out the girl's waist for description, nor the "hidden parts" which Geoffrey advises one to pass over.

<u>leg</u>	<u>Esgair gron</u> (4, 13) "plump leg"
<u>ankle</u>	<u>Ffêr fain</u> (4, 15) "slim ankle"
<u>foot</u>	<u>Ffurfeiddwen droed cyd boed byr</u> (4, 16) "Foot shapely and white although it be short"

Iolo completes his portrait with references to the girl's attire.

<u>A modrwy aur yma draw</u> (4, 10) "And a ring of gold here and there"
--

Cf. Geoffrey: circinet aurum/ Subtiles digitos (Poetria, ll. 607-8).

<u>ysgarladwisg</u> (4, 14) "scarlet dress"
<u>ffwrri fenfyr</u> (4, 15) "furry miniver"

<sup>1</sup>This detail was considered a few lines earlier and is described in the same line as her arms. The apple attribution appears in the Gogynfeirdd, in the Harley lyrics ("Mosti ryden by Rybbesdale") and would appear to have a long ancestry among Western poets.

Wrŷs gwyn ar eurlewys gwiw  
(4, 22)

"Border of white on handsome gold sleeves"

Penwisg welw. . . ,/ Penselgombr  
(4, 25-26)

"Pale head-dress. . . ,/ like a banner of cambric"

Nor does Iolo fail to incorporate the idea of this girl's having been "fashioned" by a skilled artificer:

da y lluniwyd  
(3, 19)

"well was she made"

Pwy a allai, pei pensaer,  
Peintiaw â chalch pwynt fy chwaer?  
(4, 27-28)

"Who would be able, though he be a master mason,  
To paint with lime the flourishing state of  
my mistress."

Finally, as mentioned earlier, Iolo assigns the credit for her excellent "design" to God, explaining that "God made her:"

Duw a'i gwnaeth  
(4, 29)

And we might note that God functions here very much like Matthew's "Nature the Creator."

Iolo Goch, whether by chance or design, is here working solidly with a medieval literary topic, and he does so at least in two other poems - I Syr Hywel y Fwyall and Sycharth - which can be regarded as "literary topics," namely, praise of courts.<sup>1</sup>

Another cywydd of interest for its portrait of a girl, is Gruffudd Gryg's Cywydd Merch (DGG, pp. 131-132), which, though less elaborate than Iolo's, corresponds in details and arrangement. The initial lines establish her peerless beauty:

<sup>1</sup>This is not to suggest that Iolo's use of rhetorical topics and techniques is limited to these poems. In his description of the court of Ieuan, bishop of Llanelwy (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 82) he would appear to be operating within this literary tradition also; and scattered throughout his verse, as we will have occasion to see, are examples of rhetorical techniques.



Un dyn goeth yn dwyn y gamp  
(4)

(Trans: A certain elegant woman taking the prize).

Particularly noteworthy is Gruffudd's transition from introduction to portrait proper as he explains:

Llyma'n gadr brofi adrodd  
Gwbl o bryd fy myd a'i modd.  
(7-8)

(Trans: Here is the handsome proof of my tale, the whole of my darling's shape and form).

This couplet quite clearly, and quite early in the poem, sets forth Gruffudd's theme (thesis, if you will), which he then develops in a highly organized catalogue that follows the schema suggested by Geoffrey and adopted by Iolo Goch in his I Ferch. Accordingly, he starts with the head:

head Ar ei hiad. . . .  
(9)  
"On her head. . . ."

forehead y tâl mawr araul  
(13)  
"the large gleaming forehead"

eyebrows Edau sidan gern ydiw  
Dwy ael Gwen ar dâl gwiw.<sup>1</sup>  
(15-16)  
"Gwen's eyebrows are like threads of silk  
above the cheekbones on an excellent forehead."

nose A thrwyn addwyn mwyn maith  
(28)  
"And a shapely nose, smooth and long."

eyes Golygon dduon ydd oedd;  
Muchudd o liw gyfliw ged;  
(18-19)  
"Dark eyes she had; jet-hued, colorful gift."

1

Compare this with the description of the heroine in the Middle English romance, Libeaus Desconus, ed., M. Kaluza, Alteng. Bibl., V (1890):

Her browes as selke prede,  
Y-bent in lengpe and brede.  
(940-941)

<u>whiteness</u>	Gwynnach yw ei rhyw a'i rhan Nag alarch blu, na gwylan. <sup>1</sup> (33-34) "Her kind [ <u>i. e.</u> , her natural aspect] and each part of her is whiter than a swan's feathers or a gull."
<u>lips</u>	Dewisgamp dwy wefusgwbl (24) "The chosen prize of two perfect lips"
<u>teeth</u>	A dannedd . . . / Teg cyfagos (25-26) "And teeth fair and close together"
<u>chin</u>	Cyfion aelgeth ogyfuwch (29) "Well-proportioned even chin"
<u>neck</u>	Mwnwgl cylcheugwyn manawl <sup>2</sup> (32) "neck a delicate white circle"
<u>arms</u>	Deufraich fwyn dan faich o fawl (31) "Gentle arms under the weight of praise"
<u>figure</u>	feindlos ferch (26) "slender lovely girl"

<sup>1</sup>The comparison of a woman's whiteness with a swan's is also a standard of praise frequently found in the romances. Cf. Sir Beues of Hamtoun (E. Kolbing, ed., EETS, E. S., 1885):

Iosyan, / That was as whyte as any swan.  
(3601-2)

Also, Libeaus Desconus, op. cit. 1456; Torrent of Portyngale, E. Adam, ed. (EETS, E. S., 1887), 759; Le Morte Arthur, E. D. Bruce, ed. (EETS, E. S., 1903), 1141.

<sup>2</sup>Both Geoffrey and Matthew emphasize the whiteness of the neck, while Geoffrey would call more attention to it by encircling it with a chain. The roundness of the neck, too, is regularly singled out by poets; for instance, the description of Helen from the Geste Hystoriale of the Destruction of Troy, G. A. Panton and D. Donaldson, eds. (EETS, O. S., 1869 and 1874):

With a necke . . . / . . . fetis and round  
(3066-68)



<u>chin</u>	A clove <sup>1</sup> chynne eke hadde she (550)
<u>neck</u>	. . . of good fasoun In lengthe and gretness. . . . (551-552)
<u>throat</u>	Hir throte, also whit of hewe As snowe on braunche snowed newe. (557-558)
<u>figure</u>	Of body ful wel wrought was she (559)

Her rich array ("and wel arrayed and richely," l. 578) is sketched: a fair chaplet, a rose garland, sleeves fetchingly sown, a pair of white gloves and a coat of green made of Gaunt cloth (ll. 565-574). The space given this description roughly matches Iolo's in length.

In the Harley lyric, "The Fair Maid of Ribblesdale,"<sup>2</sup> the portrait occupies the entire poem, as does the portrait in Iolo Goch's I Ferch. And similar to I Ferch and Cywydd Merch, the poem begins with hyperbolic tribute to the maid's beauty and peerlessness, then passes on to specific details.

<u>complexion</u>	Ase sonnebem hire bleo <sup>3</sup> ys briht (7)
	þe lylie lossum <sup>4</sup> is ant long, Wiþ riche rose and rode <sup>5</sup> among. (10-11)

<sup>1</sup>clove: dimpled.

<sup>2</sup>Text from G. L. Brook, ed., The Harley Lyrics (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1964), pp. 37-39.

<sup>3</sup>bleo: complexion

<sup>4</sup>lossum: lovely

<sup>5</sup>rode: rosy hue

<u>hair</u>	a fyldor fax to folde <sup>1</sup> (12)
<u>head</u>	þe sonnebeem about noon (14)
<u>eyes</u>	grete and gray ynoh (16)
<u>forehead</u>	þe mone wiþ hire mychele maht ne leneþ non such lyht anaht <sup>2</sup> . . . as hire forhed doþ in day. (19-20)
<u>brows</u>	. . . bend an heh, <sup>3</sup> whyt betuene ant nout to neh. (25-26)
<u>nose</u>	hire neose ys set as hit wel semeþ <sup>1</sup> (23)
<u>chin</u>	hire chyn ys chosen <sup>4</sup> (34)
<u>cheeks</u>	whit ynoh and rode on eke (35)
<u>mouth/lips</u>	Heo <sup>5</sup> haþ a mury mouht to mele, <sup>6</sup> wiþ lefly <sup>7</sup> rede lippes. (37-38)
<u>teeth</u>	hire teht aren white ase bon of whal, 'euene set and atled <sup>8</sup> al. (40-41)

<sup>1</sup>"A gold thread binding her hair."

<sup>2</sup>anaht: at night.

<sup>3</sup>bend an heh: arched above.

<sup>4</sup>chosen: excellent, beautiful.

<sup>5</sup>heo: she.

<sup>6</sup>to mele: to speak with.

<sup>7</sup>lefly: beautiful, lovely.

<sup>8</sup>atled: arranged.

neck swannes swyre swyþe wel ysette,<sup>1</sup>  
 a sponne lengore þen y mette.<sup>2</sup>  
 (43-44)

arms eyþer arm an elne long,<sup>3</sup>  
 baloygne mengeb<sup>4</sup> al bymong.  
 (52-53)

fingers fyngres heo haþ feir to folde  
 (55)

breasts as apple tuo of parays  
 (59)

figure a mete<sup>5</sup> myddel smal,  
 body ant brest wel mad al.  
 (73-74)

sides soft ase sylk,  
 whittore þen þe moren-mylk.  
 (76-77)

The lyric concludes with a reference to the artistry with which the maid was fashioned:

alþat ich our nempne noht  
 hit is wonder wel ywroht,  
 and elles wonder were.<sup>6</sup>  
 (79-81)

The many correspondences among these portraits suggest that they drew from a common tradition. Common to all is the emphasis on symmetry of form, the comparisons with sun and moon, the combinations of white and red in the complexion, the long throat. These parallel passages

<sup>1</sup>"A swan's neck very well set."

<sup>2</sup>"A span longer than I [ever] came across."

<sup>3</sup>elne: ell.

<sup>4</sup>baloygne mengeb: whalebone mingles.

<sup>5</sup>mete: well-proportioned.

<sup>6</sup>"All that I have not mentioned to you is wonderfully well wrought, and otherwise may be [considered] a marvel."

give some indication of the stereotyped character of the descriptio pulchritudinis. The portraits follow with varying exactness the organization and patterns of detail prescribed in the classical and medieval ars poetica. The techniques of rhetorical description attested here may have been gleaned from rhetorical or grammatical texts, or from translations of Latin poetry, or may be imitations of other models which ultimately derive from the rhetorical tradition. Whatever the explanation, the Welsh poems stand in a close relationship with poetic antecedents outside the native tradition.

The modes of apostrophe and prosopopoeia, additional means of amplification, were equally characteristic of medieval rhetorical technique. Apostrophe, or direct address to people who may be either living or dead, present or absent, or to animals, inanimate objects, or personified abstractions, occurs "in almost every composition with any pretensions to style from the eleventh century on,"<sup>1</sup> while the complainte, one of the most widely represented of medieval poetic forms,<sup>2</sup> derives from apostrophe. Among classical rhetoricians and poets, the exclamatory apostrophe was used to augment the pathetic effect. It is most frequently found among the troubadours and trouvères in the formula: "Dame, merci,"<sup>3</sup> and is as regularly found in the medieval Latin lyrics which begin with an address to nature; for example:

<sup>1</sup>J. M. Manly, "Chaucer and the Rhetoricians," op. cit., p. 244. Manly states, in addition, that "it would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of apostrophe in medieval literature."

<sup>2</sup>We will examine the complaint poem in the next chapter, specifically the poems addressed to the purse.

<sup>3</sup>For examples of apostrophe in the work of the trouvères, see Dragonetti, op. cit., pp. 278-281.



Cedit, hyems, tua durities<sup>1</sup>

or:

Salve ver optatum<sup>2</sup>

When the apostrophe is addressed to animals, birds, inanimate objects or abstractions it involves personification or prosopopoeia.<sup>3</sup>

Chaucer's use of apostrophe is so frequent that it is difficult to settle on an example, but perhaps the most salient here would be his address to Geoffrey of Vinsauf to whom he turns for guidance in the Nun's Priest's Tale:

O Gaufred,<sup>4</sup> deere maister soverayn,  
That whan thy worthy kyng Richard was slayn  
With shot, compleynedest his deeth so soore,  
Why ne hadde I now thy sentence and thy loore?  
(NPT, 3347-50)

This figure is used by Troilus scores of times (e. g., his address to Criseyde's house: "O paleys desolat," Troilus and Criseyde, V, 540; as a cry of despair: "Allas! of al my wo the welle," IV, 274); by Criseyde; by Palamon and Arcite in the Knight's Tale ("Allas," I, 1223, and countless other instances), and by a great number of his

<sup>1</sup>Waddell, Medieval Latin Lyrics, op. cit., p. 222. Her translation: "Now, Winter, yieldeth all thy dreariness" (p. 223).

<sup>2</sup>Waddell, p. 244, "Greetings, desired Spring."

<sup>3</sup>Mrs. Bromwich, both in her Gregynog lecture, "Dafydd ap Gwilym: Y Traddodiad Islenyddol," printed in Dafydd ap Gwilym A Chanu Serch Yr Oesoedd Canol, John Rowlands, ed. (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru and Coleg Prifysgol Dewi Sant, 1975), pp. 43-52 and in her Writers of Wales book, Dafydd ap Gwilym (University of Wales Press, 1974) mistakes Dafydd's use of personification as resulting from Welsh sources, especially his use of birds which she sees as rooted in the prophetic tradition on the one hand, and on the other, explaining his use of this figure as emanating "from an impulse to reach out and encounter sentient life in all created things, both animate and inanimate . . . , in the seasons themselves" (Writers of Wales, p. 81). It is a conventional conceit.

<sup>4</sup>Gaufred: Geoffrey of Vinsauf.

characters in the Canterbury Tales. Chaucer himself uses it regularly in his shorter pieces.

Dafydd ap Gwilym and his contemporaries use apostrophe and personification in similar ways. Iolo Goch's Y Farf (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 5) is essentially a direct address to his beard, and begins with apostrophe:

"Is it you, beard?"

Ai dydy, farf. . . .  
(5,1)

and continues by asking, "old sow's hair, where do you come from?"

"Blew'r henwch, o ble'r hanwyd?"  
(5,27)

Llywelyn Goch ap Meurig Hen's I'r Benglog<sup>1</sup> falls into the same category. as do the addresses to the purse by Llywelyn ap y Moel and Siôn Cent which we will review in the next chapter.

Apostrophes to Nature, similar to those noted in the medieval Latin verses above, can also be found in Welsh verse. Dafydd ap Gwilym's Mawl I'r Haf, for instance:

Tydi'r Haf, tad y rhyfyg . . .  
(GDG 27, 1)  
("Thou Summer, father of wantonness")  
Manag ym, haf . . (GDG 27, 27)  
("Tell me, summer,")

<sup>1</sup>LXXXVII in the 1935 edition of DGG; cf. Dafydd's address to his shadow (GDG 141), to his sword (GDG 143), Iolo Goch's to his baselard (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 56), and Chaucer's to his book (Tr. & Cr., V, 1786).

Elsewhere he addresses the wind:

Och ŵr. . . .  
(GDG 117, 41)  
("Oh man.")

and the month of May:

Hawddamor,<sup>1</sup> glwysgor glasgoed,  
Fis Mai haf. . . .  
(GDG 69, 1-2)  
("Greetings, lovely sanctuary of the greenwood,  
The summer month of May. . . .")

Compare this with Chaucer's:

Welcome be thou, faire, fresshe May.  
(Knight's Tale, 1511)

Gruffudd Llwyd, too, couches his I Ddanfon yr Haul i Annerch (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 144)  
in the form of an apostrophe: "Run, fair sun."

Yr haul deg . . . /Rhed ti  
(144, 1-2)

Dafydd's many addresses to his llatai are similar.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the most  
extraordinary tour de force among these poems is his cywydd to the wind

<sup>1</sup>Hawddamawr as a signal of address also appears in GDG 133, 1-2; GDG 134, 1-2; Iolo Goch's Llys Ieuan, Esgob Llanelwy (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 82), ll. 1 and 3 and in many other poems by the cywyddwyr, for which, see Lloyd-Jones' Geirfa, p. 767.

<sup>2</sup>Such addresses to creatures or objects meant to convey a message of love were common in the Middle Ages. T. Chotzen in Recherches sur la Poésie de Dafydd ap Gwilym (Amsterdam, 1927), Part 2, Chapter II surveys the tradition.

(GDG 117),<sup>1</sup> in which he exploits the possibilities personification allows by inserting a catalogue of metaphorical epithets in his direct address.

Metaphor, of course, would seem to be the universal property of most poets in all ages. Nonetheless, we are able to isolate several groups of metaphors which seem to have enjoyed special popularity in the Middle Ages. We cannot, of course, do more than take a cursory look at the use of metaphor for reasons of space, although the cywyddwyr achieved some of their most graphic, dynamic, and graceful effects through their polished use of metaphor. Some of their metaphors seem strikingly "classic," as, for instance, Dafydd's image of the wind as the "nest of the great rain:"

nyth y glaw mawr  
(GDG 117, 22)

others more in the spirit of the Anglo-Saxon kenning:

seirniawg wybr  
(28)  
("sky-trampler")

while the ascription of laughter to nature is grounded in antiquity and met with in school examples.<sup>2</sup>

Hyrdiwr, breiniol chwarddwr bryn  
(37)  
("Thruster, privileged laughter on the hill.")

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Parry in "Dafydd ap Gwilym," Lleufer, XII (Hydref, 1958), pp. 119-126 has a valuable analysis of Dafydd's I'r Gwynt. Iolo Goch's I'r Llong is also characterized by an effective series of metaphorical personifications.

<sup>2</sup>See Curtius, p. 128.

Of course, poetry is by its very nature metaphorical, and the Welsh bards certainly required no instruction in the use of metaphorical language. Yet we can adduce some historical categories of metaphors that do not appear to be present in the *Cynfeirdd* or *Gogynfeirdd*, particularly the use of "personal metaphors," *i. e.*, the metaphorical conception of inanimate objects or natural phenomena as persons.<sup>1</sup> This is basically the reverse of the native habit of martial descriptive epithets, which tend to describe men in terms of proud and savage beasts and birds. One might note, for example, that Gwalchmai's *Gorhoffedd*, which devotes a number of lines to evocative description of his sword, offered every opportunity for metaphor and personification, yet both are absent. So, too, in the nature descriptions of the *Gogynfeirdd* - they are lush and occasionally graphic, but not metaphorical; nor is there any apparent tendency towards personification. If such descriptive devices do occasionally appear, they are not obvious in the bulk of the poetry, and in any event were not central to their conception of descriptive techniques.

The personal metaphor, denoting an animal, object, natural force or abstraction by a human appellation, usually feminine, and most often in terms of a familial relationship such as sister, mother, etc., was a favorite among classical poets. Curtius comprehensively summarized the tradition this way:

<sup>1</sup>Curtius, pp. 131ff. reviews some of the historical examples of the personal metaphor.

For Homer, flight is the "companion" of panic (*Iliad*, IX, 2); panic the son of Ares (*Iliad*, XIII, 209); infatuation (Ate) the eldest daughter of Zeus (*Iliad*, XIX, 91). Pindar calls the Muses daughters of memory; rains children of the clouds; wine son of the vine; songs daughters of the Muses; hubris the mother of satiety, etc. Pindar goes beyond these genealogical connections only rarely. Aetna is "nurse of the sharp snow," law "king over all" (cf. Herodotus, III, 38). Aeschylus calls decorum "mother of success" (*Septem*, 224). . . . The mothers, stepmothers, companions, handmaids, and maids of Roman rhetoric had a most extensive progeny in the Middle Ages.<sup>1</sup>

In medieval Latin lyrics, the moon is "sister to Phoebus" (*Phoebe soror*; Petronius Arbiter in Waddell, p. 26, l. 1); and Strabo's muse is his sister (*Musa . . . soror*; Waddell, p. 122, l. 1). Dante frequently uses the personal metaphor in his *Divina Commedia*: "human art is 'the granddaughter of God' because it is the daughter of Nature, who herself is the daughter of God" (*Inf.*, XI, 105).<sup>2</sup> And for Chaucer, May is "that moder of monthes glade" (*Tr. & Cr.*, II, 50).

The *cywyddwyr* exploit the personal metaphor, and in this respect differ sharply from the Gogynfeirdd. Iolo Goch's *Diolch am Faslard* (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 56) relies on personal metaphors with strong genealogical associations; for example:

chwaer undad  
(57, 9)  
("sister ~~having the same~~ father")<sup>3</sup>

cyfnitherw  
(57, 11)  
("female first cousin")<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Curtius, *European Lit.*, op. cit. p. 131.

<sup>2</sup>Curtius, p. 132.

<sup>3</sup>*i. e.*, of the same father as Roland's sword.

<sup>4</sup>*i. e.*, first cousin to Oliver's sword.

nith ddiragrith  
 (57, 13)  
 ("unhypocritical niece")

Further examples of the personal metaphor can be found throughout the verse of his contemporaries. Gruffudd ab Adda calls the birch tree the "sister of the dark wood" (chwaer gwŷdd gwyll; (DGG p. 114, l. 37); while an anonymous poet refers to the snow as "son of the same womb" (gwas ungroth).<sup>1</sup>

There are a series of personal metaphors in Y Niwl (DGG XXXIX), formerly attributed to Dafydd ap Gwilym but now rejected by Parry. In this poem, the mist is:

tad y glaw  
 (27)  
 ("father of the rain")

a mam wyt iddaw  
 (28)  
 ("and its mother you are")

tad y lladron  
 (34)  
 ("father of thieves")

In a graphically successful metaphor, Dafydd calls his shadow a "black brother of a man in old rags:"

Brawd du o ŵr mewn brat hen  
 (GDG 141, 36)

while in Mawl I'r Haf the summer is "father of wantonness:"

tad y rhyfyg  
 (GDG 27, 1)

The wave in GDG 71 is a "jousting woman" (ymwanwraig; 28), the "sail's partner" (gyamar hwyl; 11) and a "horseman of the sea" (marchoges môr; 34). Newborough is also accorded a personal metaphor as Dafydd describes it as "heaven's first cousin" (cyfnither nef; GDG 134, 10).

<sup>1</sup>No. 24 in D. J. Bowen's edition, Barddoniaeth Yr Uchelwyr (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1957), l. 33.



Another set of metaphors emerges as equally popular among medieval poets, that is, the reference to nature as clothed in various vestments or adorned with various ornaments. In the medieval Latin lyrics the earth is "clad with all blossoming:"<sup>1</sup>

ornatus suos induit

Charles D'Orleans expands the conceit in a rondeau:

Le temps a laissié son manteau  
De vent, de froidure et de pluie,  
Et s'est vestu de broderie,  
De soleil luyant, cler et beau.<sup>2</sup>

Chaucer thus describes nature in springtime:

For ther is neither busk nor hay<sup>3</sup>  
In May, that it nyl shrouded ben,  
And it with newe leves wren.  
(RR, 54-55)  
And than bycometh the ground so proud  
That it wole have a newe shroud,  
And makith so queynt his robe and faire  
That it hath hewes an hundred payre.<sup>4</sup>

Dafydd ap Gwilym's Mis Mai a Mis Ionawr (GDG 69) describes May:

Gwasgod praff, gwisgiad priffyrdd,  
Gwisgodd bob lle â'i we wyrdd.  
(13-14)

(Trans: A thick shade, highway's clothing, has attired every place with its green web.)

<sup>1</sup>Waddell, text and translation, pp. 168 and 169.

<sup>2</sup>"Nature has cast off her winter cloak of wind and cold and rain, and dressed herself in embroidery of clear and lovely sunshine." Text and translation from Brian Woledge, The Penguin Book of French Verse, 1 (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1966), p. 291.

<sup>3</sup>busk nor hay: bush nor hedge.

<sup>4</sup>an hundred payre: a hundred sets.



anian Bedwyr  
(7, 2)  
("of the nature of Bedwyr")

This usage is the most typical even throughout the cywyddwyr, though one finds Dafydd ap Gwilym often dispensing with the conjunctive signals:

cerais Degau  
(GDG 65, 1)  
("I loved Tegau.")

Luned oleuni  
(GDG 43, 5)  
("a lustrous Luned")

The use of this ornament is so pervasive and so familiar to readers that it requires no further comment here. Examples of denominatio (also called metonymy), which is the substitution of an attribute or suggestive word for the thing itself, are equally familiar and pervasive. It is a standard way of describing a woman, so that a lady's breath becomes "the breath of red roses" (odor roseus; Waddell, p. 258, l. 21), or the lady herself, the Rose (flos florem; Waddell, p. 264, l. 1; p. 268, l. 28), or the "flower of the thorn" (flos de spina; Waddell, p. 268, l. 14). Bertran de Born's lady has a complexion which is as "white as a hawthorn flower" (blancha pel cors com flors d'espina),<sup>1</sup> a use of denominatio which overlaps simile.

The Welsh poets manage this figure successfully without the conjunctive as. Hywel ab Owain describes a girl:

lliw hafin  
(H, 317, 10)  
("of the hue of summer weather")

and from the Gogynfeirdd on, the favorite descriptions among the Welsh bards are attributives associated with waves and foam and summer and

<sup>1</sup>Text and translation from Press, Anthology of Troubadour Poetry, op. cit., pages 156 and 157.

sunlight. In the cywyddwyr, snow becomes a common standard of comparison;<sup>1</sup> and in this connection it is interesting to note that Geoffrey (Documentum, II, 3. 16; Faral, p. 288) specifically urges the use of "snowy" to describe a white or fair complexion. There are many examples of this particular attribution in the cywyddwyr, some of them delicate and dextrous, others fairly pedestrian. A few examples should be sufficient.

lliw eiry Ionawr  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 1, 15)  
("of the color of January snow")

lliw eira bas ar lasgraig  
(ibid., 11)  
("of the hue of shallow snow on grey stone")

hoen eiry di-frisg  
(GDG 33, 18)  
("of the sprightliness of untrodden snow")

On the other hand, one does not find in the works of the Welsh bards the equally standard rhetorical description of a woman's fairness as "milky," which was so frequent in the Middle English lyrics that it became a wooden cliché.

In the category of ornata facilitas we find a fair sampling of rhetorical colores. Repetitio, like metaphor, is a fairly predictable poetic device and may be regarded generally as a natural means of poetic expression.<sup>2</sup> It is certainly effective in elegiac verse where it marks

<sup>1</sup>We will examine conventional descriptions of women in the love poetry of the cywyddwyr in Chapter 5.

<sup>2</sup>Dragonetti, writing on the use of this figure by the trouvères, comments:

Lorsqu'un trouvère veut créer un effet poétique qui accentue le sens de la chose qu'il donne à entendre, il procède notamment par la reprise plus ou moins fréquente du mot qui porte l'idée principale de la strophe ou du vers:

Siens sui et siens esserai  
Le répétition d'un même adjectif peut servir à augmenter la couleur affective d'un vers, à créer un effet de mélancolie. . . . (p. 35)

intensity of emotion. It is used for this purpose and to dramatic effect by Gruffudd ab yr Ynad Coch in his elegy to the last Llywelyn, a poem strikingly characterized by rhetoric.<sup>1</sup> Examples from the cywyddwyr are many: Iolo Goch, Marwnad Syr Rhys (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 10, especially the concluding lines); it is also dotted throughout his Marwnad Tudur Fychan (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 12, ll. 21-23; 13, 25-27; and the six concluding lines). Gruffudd Gryg's Cywydd Marwnad Rhys ap Tudur o Fon (DDG p. 147, ll. 11-12; p. 148, ll. 23-31; ll. 35, 39, 41, 43; ll. 52-60). Dafydd ap Gwilym relies heavily on it in his elegiac and encomiastic verse (GDG 5, ll. 29-32, 37-40, 41-42; GDG 7, ll. 27-33; and throughout GDG 13 and 15, plus in a number of other poems). Gruffudd Llwyd's I Owain Amhredudd o'r Neuadd Wen ym Mhowys (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 128) opens with a four-line repetition.

Chaucer uses it in Troilus and Criseyde when affecting the high, or sublime, style as the tormented Troilus laments his decision to let Criseyde go:

"Whi nyl I make atones riche and pore  
To have inough to doone, er that she go?  
Why nyl I brynge al Troie upon a roore?  
Whi nyl I slen this Diomedede also?  
Why nyl I rather with a man or two

<sup>1</sup>No. 36 in Thomas Parry, ed. The Oxford Book of Welsh Verse (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1962). All future references to this edition will be cited as OBWV. Repetitio is scattered throughout the poem (e. g., Gwae fi, "Woe to me;" arglwydd, "lord;" and the rhetorical question: Poni welwch-chwi, "Do you not see?" plus many more instances). The rhetorical question is itself a stylistic device, as is the play on pen, "head," in the concluding verses.

Stele hire away? Whi wol I this endure?  
 Whi nyl I helpen to myn owen cure?"  
 (V, 43-49)

One could, of course, multiply the examples from Chaucer, as well as from the French poets, so frequent was this color. Jaufre Rudel's Lanquan li jorn son lonc en may ("When days are long in May")<sup>1</sup> contrasts that time of joy with "love [that] is far away" (l'amor de lonh) which is repeated in every stanza of the poem. Bernart de Ventadorn emphasizes the importance of the joi of love by repeating the key work joi six times in five lines.<sup>2</sup>

Dafydd ap Gwilym likewise uses this device to secure emphasis and a certain charm:<sup>3</sup>

Gosyml fûm am forwyn lân,  
Gosyml ni bu am gusan.  
 (GDG 41, 13-14)

("Artless I was with regard to the fair maid;  
 Artless she was not regarding a kiss.")

while his repetition of haf, "summer," in Yr Haf (GDG 24) parallels Bernart's use of joi. Similarly in Mawl i'r Haf (GDG 27), Dafydd concludes his "farewell" with yn iach repeated in five consecutive lines (43-47). As with Chaucer and other medieval poets, the cywyddwyr rely so often on this color that readers should be readily familiar with it.

<sup>1</sup>Number 25, page 105 in Goldin, Lyrics of the Troubadours and Trouvères, op. cit.

<sup>2</sup>Number 24, pages 137-139 in Goldin.

<sup>3</sup>D. J. Bowen in his "Dafydd ap Gwilym a Datblygiad y Cywydd," op. cit., examines some instances of repetitio in Dafydd's work.

Traductio, the repetition of a word in a different form, voice, or case also secures emphasis. When used skillfully it can be very powerful, as in Ausonius' verse to his wife: "Love, let us live as we have lived, nor lose/ The little names that were the first night's grace."

Uxor vivamus ut viximus et teneamus  
nomina quae primo sumpsimus in thalamo.<sup>1</sup>

or Alcuin's rhetorically elaborate Versus de Cuculo (Waddell, p. 88), or his Epitaphium:

quod nunc es fueram . . .  
et quod nunc ego sum, tuque futurus eris.<sup>2</sup>

Chaucer repeatedly turns to this device, but I will single out only two examples. First, from The House of Fame:

And somme corouned were as kynges,  
With corounes wrcought ful of losenges.<sup>3</sup>  
(1316-1317)

and, from Troilus and Criseyde:

. . . for they shal nevere twynne.  
For though in erthe ytwynned be we tweyne. . . .<sup>4</sup>  
(IV, 787-788)

This figure occurs in Dafydd ap Gwilym's verse, and is heavily represented in Cywydd i Ifor Hael (GDG 7) from which I cite the following examples:

<sup>1</sup>Waddell, Medieval Latin Lyrics, trans. and text, pp. 42-43.

<sup>2</sup>Waddell, p. 104; trans: "What thou are now . . . , I was: what I am now, so shalt thou be." (p. 105).

<sup>3</sup>losenges: lozenges, small diamond-shaped figures.

<sup>4</sup>twynne: separate ytwynned: separated.



Telais . . . / Telaist. . . .  
(7-8)  
("I paid . . . / You paid. . . .")

Rhoist ym . . . / Rhoddaf yt. . . .  
(9-10)  
("You gave me . . . / I shall give you. . . .")

Cyfarf arf, eirf ni'th weheirdd  
(11)  
("well-armed weapon, weapons do not stop you.")

Or, compare:

Canmol ei llygaid gloywon,  
Canmolid prifeirdd heirdd hon.  
(GDG 41, 15-16)  
("Praising her sparkling eyes,  
Lovely chief bards praise her.")<sup>1</sup>

Addaw ffôl . . . / Addewid gwin. . . .  
(GDG 41, 39-40)  
("A foolish promise . . . / Wine was promised.")

Other examples from the cywyddwyr can be found in Gruffudd Llwyd's  
I Owain Glyndŵr (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 122): Cefais . . . / Cei . . . / Cael ("I got . . .  
You will get . . . a getting"); also from Gruffudd Llwyd's poem: Cymro  
(124, 16; "Welshman") and Cymry (124, 19; "Welshmen"). Note, too,  
Iolo Goch's opening lines in his Llys Owain Glyndŵr Yn Sycharth (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 36):

Addewais . . .  
Addewid teg, addaw taith. . . .  
Ei addewid a addawo.  
(1-4)  
("I have promised . . . a fair promise,  
promising a journey. . . . His promise  
which he may promise.")

Contentio, the expression of contrasted or contrary ideas in  
adjoining phrases or clauses, appears with marked effect in much medieval  
poetry. Guillaume IX builds three lines of verse around this figure:

<sup>1</sup>All these examples also illustrate anaphoric repetition, *i. e.*,  
beginning successive clauses with the same word.

Ieu conosc ben sen e folhor,  
e conosc anta et honor,  
et ai ardimen e paor.

("I know what wisdom is, and foolishness,  
And I know what honor is, and shame,  
I can tell bravery and fear.")<sup>1</sup>

Chaucer exploits its possibilities:

I have a joly wo, a lusty sorwe.  
(Tr. & Cr., II, 1099)  
And was a povre Persoun of a toun,  
But riche he was of hooly thoght and werk.  
(General Prologue, 478-479)

My good ys harm  
(Book of the Duchess, 604)

Dafydd ap Gwilym manages contentio adroitly:

Myned o'm gwlad . . . / . . . a dyfod, Ifor.  
(GDG 7, 21-22)  
("I go from my land . . . and come, Ifor.")  
  
Peunydd . . . / . . . pheunoeth  
(GDG 42, 53-54)  
("Daily. . . . nightly")  
  
Gwyn yw'r tâl . . . / Du yw'r gwallt  
(GDG 45, 27-28)  
("White is [her] forehead . . . black is [her] hair.")  
  
Dos fry . . . / Dos obry  
(GDG 117, 61-62)  
("Come aloft . . . come below.")

Exclamatio, or direct exclamation, as a method of arousing emotion, is heavily attested in medieval poetry. Particularly suited to the elegy, it is found in Gruffudd ab yr Ynad Coch's vehement outcry on the death

<sup>1</sup>Text and translation from Goldin, op. cit., pp. 32-33.

of Llywelyn the Last, and throughout the elegiac verse of the cywyddwyr.  
 A favorite with Chaucer, he uses it most frequently in the formula "Alas" -  
 "Allas that day that I was born" (Knight's Tale, 1223) and in standard  
 variations of this formula. Exclamatio frequently occurs with apostrophe:

" . . . O paleys desolat,  
 O hous of houses whilom best iheight,<sup>1</sup>  
 O paleys empty and disconsolat,  
 O thow lanterne of which queynt<sup>2</sup> is the light,  
 O paleys, whilom day, that now art nyght.  
 (Tr. & Cr., 540-544)

or, as a contemptuous dismissal:

Fy on hire pompe and on hire glotonye!  
 (Summoner's Tale, 1927)

or simply as an impassioned cry:

O, wel-away that I was born!  
 (The House of Fame, 345)  
 O verrey lord, O love! O god, allas!  
 (Tr. & Cr., IV, 288)

Dafydd ap Gwilym uses it to curse Eiddig:

oerfel iddaw!  
 (GDG 25, 13)  
 ("misery on him!")

and in an ecstatic outburst in response to Morfudd's embrace:

wi o'r aerwy!  
 (GDG 53, 38)  
 ("Oh, that necklace!")

but most typically as a sign of grief, paralleling the examples of the  
 impassioned outcry in Chaucer's work:

<sup>1</sup>  
whilom best iheight: formerly called the best.

<sup>2</sup>  
queynt: quenched.

och fi  
                   (GDG 36, 26)<sup>1</sup>  
 ("Oh, me")

Rhetorical effect is also achieved through interrogatio in which the poet raises a question to arouse emotion but not to stimulate an answer. Similar to exclamatio, it is often used as a passionate query. Dragonetti remarks that its varied effects allowed the trouvères to avoid monotony, observing, too, that it is a prominent device in the complaint.<sup>2</sup> Gace Brule wonders "why did God give her the beauty to destroy me?" (Dex, por qu'en ot tant a moi desconfire?)<sup>3</sup> Petrarch in a lovely and famous sonnet asks: "If love is not, what is this then I feel?" (S'amor non e, che dunque e quel ch'io sento?).<sup>4</sup> And in a striking parallel Chaucer's Troilus laments:

If no love is, o God, what fele I so?  
 And if love is, what thing and which is he?<sup>5</sup>  
   (I, 400-401)

Other examples from Chaucer are many: "O myghty God, what shal he seye?" (Tr. & Cr., II, 1422); "Is this a mannes herte?" (Tr. & Cr., III, 1098); and, extended over several lines:

What is mankynde moore unto you holde  
 Than is the sheep that rouketh in the folde?  
   (Knight's Tale, 1307-1308)

<sup>1</sup>Cf. GDG 86, 12; 89, 18; 91, 4; 98, 22; 100, 18; 103, 26 etc.

<sup>2</sup>Dragonetti, op. cit., p. 41.

<sup>3</sup>Goldin, op. cit., pp. 398-399.

<sup>4</sup>James J. Wilhelm, trans., Medieval Song (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1971), pp. 246-247.

<sup>5</sup>The Canticus Troili above is modeled on Petrarch's Sonnet 88.

Or, compare his:

What is this world? What asketh men to have?  
(Knight's Tale, 2777)

with Iolo Goch's: "What is the world?"

Beth yw'r byd?  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 60, 7)

Dafydd's usage corresponds to Chaucer's in many instances. For example:

Duw lwyd, pwy a'm dilidia?  
(GDG 45, 17)  
("Holy God, who will pacify me?")

O Dduw, pam, loer ddinam lw,  
Yr honnaist y gair hwnnw?  
(GDG 35, 11-12)

("O God, why, faultless moon's vow,  
Did you declare those words?")

Gruffudd Llwyd uses interrogatio in a straightforward rhetorical question:

O Dduw, ai pechod i ddyn  
Er mawl gymryd aur melyn?  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 119, 1-2)

("O God, is it a sin for a man to accept  
gold for praise?")

Iolo Goch stimulates interest by asking:

Pam mai'r llew crafangdew cryf  
Mwy nag arth?  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 46, 27-28)

("Why is it that the mighty lion with  
thick claw is bigger than a bear?")

Again, one could multiply examples from the cywyddwyr, but there should be no need to continue itemizing such instances.

Ratiocinatio, a color which is also posed in the form of a question, is used to pave the way for an idea the poet wants to elaborate on, and, therefore, unlike interrogatio, involves both the question and the subsequent answering of it. It is the question, however, which is the rhetorical device.<sup>1</sup> The interior debates of Palamon and Arcite on the question of Providence, Determination, and Free Will in the Knight's Tale (ll. 1251-1267 and 1303-1333) are essentially processes of exposition and reasoning. We might use the former as an example:

Allas, why pleynten folk so in commune  
On purveiaunce of God, or of Fortune,  
That yeveth hem ful ofte in many a gyse  
Wel bettre than they kan hemself devyse?  
(1251-1254)

This question leads Arcite into a Boethian discussion on the vanity of human wishes, and it is this topic that Chaucer wants to develop.

Iolo Goch uses ratiocinatio to pose a question that he goes on to answer in an extended passage. The question:

Pa ryw ystyr, pâr osteg,  
Y rhoed yr arfau tau teg?  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 47, 7-8)

("What meaning, ready proclamation,  
~~Did your fair escutcheon give~~ ?")

This is the rhetorical stimulus for Iolo's Mawl i Syr Rosier Mortimer. Gruffudd Llwyd also uses the device to stimulate a description:

Pa ryw wlad?  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 145, 29)  
("What kind of land?")

The answer is provided in the rest of the poem which praises Morgannwg.

<sup>1</sup>Dragonetti, op. cit., p. 43 surveys examples in the trouvères.

Sententia, a thoroughly medieval form of moralizing or pointing a truth, expresses a psychological experience or states a general truth in a line or two.<sup>1</sup> A medieval Latin lyric, for example, concludes with a commonplace made poetic:

Venus despicit senes,  
qui inpleti sunt doloribus.<sup>2</sup>

Chaucer, again, provides numerous examples:

That 'rooteles moot grene soone deye.'  
(Tr. & Cr., IV, 770)

For all that comth, comth by necessite.  
(Tr. & Cr., IV, 958)

As tyme hem hurt, a tyme doth hem cure.<sup>3</sup>  
(Tr. & Cr., V, 350)

Such moralizing or general philosophizing is found, naturally enough, in the Welsh poetry. Llywelyn Goch ap Meurig Hen's I'r Benglog (DGG pp. 162-164), an essentially didactic poem, supplies examples. We cite one which Llywelyn uses to conclude his cywydd:

Rhof a Duw faint yw rhwyf dyn,  
Llunio baich llawn o bechod,  
Lle rhyfedd i falchedd fod.  
(54-56)

("Between me and God, how great is man's arrogance!  
to make a burden full of sin, a strange  
place for vanity to be.")

Gruffudd Llwyd, quoting Merlin:

Rhaid i bawb er hyd y bo  
Gwir ddiofrydu a garo.  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 114, 17-18)

("It is necessary for everyone, however long he  
may live, to renounce truly what he loves.")

<sup>1</sup>See Dragonetti, op. cit., pp. 52-55 for French examples.

<sup>2</sup>Waddell, pp. 232-233.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Dafydd ap Gwilym's GDG 137, 63-66 and its Biblical echoes.



Dafydd ap Gwilym offers several examples in his Y Bardd a'r Brawd Llwyd:

O'r nef y cad digrifwch  
Ac o uffern bob tristwch.  
(GDG 137, 49-50)

("Delight comes from Heaven, and every grief  
from Hell.")

Other examples from the same poem occur in lines 51-52, 41-42, and in a series of maxims that are strongly reminiscent of Eccl.: "A time for food, and a time for prayer," etc. (ll. 63-66 in Dafydd), while the couplet introducing the passage is also Biblical in its echoes: "Man does not live by bread alone."

Nid ar un bwyd ac enllyn  
Y mae Duw yn porthi dyn.  
(61-62)

("Not on food and [a savory] seasoning alone  
does God nourish man.")

Further examples can be found in GDG 19 (the first six lines enlarging on "here today, gone tomorrow," and thus universalizing on the death of Madog Benfras); GDG 137, 49-50; GDG 81, 25-28; GDG 49, 23-24; in IGE<sup>2</sup>. 114, 7-8 (Gruffudd Llwyd); and in Gruffudd Gryg's I'r Byd DGG<sup>2</sup>, Sion Cent's verse is notable also for the use of sententiae.

Two figures in particular were used to achieve rhythmic effects. Membrum, called legato by Dragonetti,<sup>1</sup> is the expression of an idea in parallel grammatical forms, in a series, and joined by the same conjunction. Articulus, Dragonetti's staccato, introduces a contrapuntal movement, and omits the conjunctions. Both are frequently found in medieval Latin and vernacular poetry. For example, membrum:

<sup>1</sup>Dragonetti, op. cit., provides French examples, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup>LXXVI.

. . . rigor et glacies  
brumalis et feritas, rabies,  
torpor et improba segnities,  
pallor et ira, dolor et macies.<sup>1</sup>

Or che 'l ciel e la terra e 'l vento tace,  
E le fere e gli augelli il sonno affrena.<sup>2</sup>

Chaucer, of the Clerk:

Noght o word spak he moore than was neede,  
And that was seyde in forme and reverence,  
And short and quyke and ful of hy sentence.  
(General Prologue, 304-306)

In a highly rhetorical conclusion to his Marwnad Syr Rhys, Iolo Goch loads his verse with a membrum series:

A'i genedl . . .  
A'i wayw . . .  
A'i emys . . .  
A'i lem . . .  
A'i aesawr . . .  
A'i bebyll . . .  
Ner, a'i faner . . .  
A'i arwyl, a'i hwyl hyloyw,  
A'i guras a'i helm las loyw,  
A'i seirch . . .  
A'i eisiau . . .  
A'i enaid. . . .  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 11, 16-27)

Thus the catalogue: "and his race . . . ; and his spear . . . and his stallions . . . and his sharpened point . . . and his ~~shields~~ . . . and his ~~tents~~ . . .

<sup>1</sup>Waddell, op. cit., text, p. 222, translation, p. 223.

. . . all thy frozenness,  
All frost and fog, and wind's untowardness.  
All sullenness, uncomely sluggishness,  
Paleness and anger, grief and haggardness.

<sup>2</sup>Petrarch, in Wilhelm, op. cit.; Italian text, page 397, English translation, page 247.

The earth and wind are quiet now, [and] the sky,  
[And] sleep bridles beast and bird without a sound.

Lord, and his banner . . . and his funeral rites and his bold [i. e., prominent] bright mantle, and his cuirass, and his bright blue helmet, and his horses' trappings . . . and his need . . . and his soul", produces what Dragonetti would term the pathetic effect.<sup>1</sup>

Dafydd ap Gwilym uses membrum to emphasize his irritation at the insistent clamor of the clock in GDG 66, and he introduces the passage with a rhetorical exclamation:

Och i'r cloc yn ochr y clawdd  
 Du ei ffriw a'm deffroawdd.  
 Difwyn fo'i ben a'i dafod  
 A'i ddwy raff iddo a'i rod,  
 A'i bwysau, pelennau pŵl,  
 A'i fuarthau a'i fwrthwl,  
 A'i hwyaid yn tybiaid dydd,  
 A'i felinau aflonydd.

(21-28)

(Trans: Woe to the clock by the side of the ditch that awoke me; black its face. Disagreeable may its mouth and tongue be thought, and its two ropes and its wheel, and its weights, stupid balls, and its enclosures and its hammer, and its ducks imagining [it's] day, and its restless mills.)

Articulus might be briefly illustrated with a few examples.

First, medieval Latin:

Omne genus demoniorum,  
 cecorum, claudorum, sive confusorum. . . .<sup>2</sup>

Chaucer:

Blessynge halles, chambres, kichenes, boures,  
 Citees, burghes, castels, hye toures,

<sup>1</sup>Page 37 in Dragonetti, op. cit.

<sup>2</sup>Waddell, text, p. 210; trans., p. 211: "Every one of demon race, blind and bald and ruinous."

Thropes, bernes, shipnes, dayeryes. . . .  
 (Wife of Bath's Tale, 869-71)

Petrarch:

Vegghio, penso, ardo, piango. . . .<sup>1</sup>

The cywyddwyr also regularly omit connectives as they pile up parallel series, or omit prepositions and conjunctions. An example from Iolo Goch's Diolch Am Gyllell Hir Neu Faslard (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 56, 8) will do: Callestrfin holltrin hylltrem ("fine flint, ugly-looking [and] battle-split").

Dafydd ap Gwilym, in a repetitio series:

Dy aur a gawn . . .  
 Dy loyw win, dy lawenydd,  
 Dy fedd glas difaddau i glêr,  
 Dy fragod du ei friger.  
 (GDG 45, 9-12)

(Trans: Your gold I got . . . your bright wine, your joy, your pale mead without stint for bards, your bragget whose head is dark.)

Compar, the balancing of successive clauses with an equal number of syllables, plays on syntactical parallelism and frequently on repetition. Examples from Chaucer:

O herte myn . . .  
 O lady myn . . .  
 (Tr. & Cr., V, 228-229)

by stokkes and by stones . . .  
 (Tr. & Cr., III, 589)

Examples from the cywyddwyr are many; I give but a few.

Ni'm câr hon . . . /Ni'm gad hun.  
 (GDG 45, 21-22)  
 ("She does not love me, does not let me sleep.")

<sup>1</sup>"I see, I think, I burn, I cry." Wilhelm, p. 397.

A'i chyweirgorn . . . /A'i chyweirdant  
 (GDG 20, 17-18)  
 ("And her tuning key, and her tuning-string.")

Nid wyf glaf . . . /Nid wyf iach . . . /Nid wyf farw.  
 (GDG 36, 17-19)  
 ("I am not ill, I am not well, I am not dead.")

From Iolo Goch:

anrheg am anrheg  
 (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 83, 19)  
 ("gift for gift")

Diod am ddiod a ddaw,  
 O'i winllan, ym o'i wenllaw.  
 (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 83, 21-22)<sup>1</sup>

(Trans: Drink after drink will come to me from his vineyard [and] from his fair hand".)

Annominatio, a device that would lend itself to the demands of cynghanedd, is: (a) a homophonic play on words similar in sound but different in meaning,<sup>2</sup> or (b) various inflected forms of the same word, or derivatives of that word. It was, as Curtius has observed, much favored by "late Antique and medieval Latin mannerism," and often found in the work of Sidonius, Alan, Walter of Chatillon, and the rhetorical handbooks.<sup>3</sup> The Rhetorica ad Herennium provides examples of words

<sup>1</sup>Iolo Goch's Marwnad Syr Rhys (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 10), which we have noted for its use of membrum, also supplies several examples of compar. For example: page 11, ll. 3-4, 5-6, 13-14.

<sup>2</sup>Geoffrey's examples in Poetria (l. 1135; Faral, p. 232) play on carne: carie (in carne sine carie); on hamo:homo (ll. 1135-36). In his Documentum, II, 3.64 (Faral, pp. 296-97): parva:prava, and apta:arta.

<sup>3</sup>Curtius, op. cit., p. 279.

derived from the same root but modified by prefixes or different case endings.<sup>1</sup> Used in this way it functions as a thematic word repetition and approximates traductio, a figure which we have already reviewed. Annominatio was certainly a color which would have lent itself to Welsh use, given the exigencies of cynghanedd, and, in fact, cynghanedd almost wholly confuses the picture since the effects are so similar. Nonetheless, it is worth reviewing here, if only to point out medieval stylistic correspondences.

From Guillaume IX:

e.l plus cortes vilanejar  
e totz vilas encortezir.<sup>2</sup>

From Dante:

Farei parlando innamorar la gente,  
E io non vo' parlar si altamente. . . .  
Che non e cosa da parlarne altrui.<sup>3</sup>

From Chaucer:

Of cursyng oghte ech gilty man him drede,  
For curs wol slee right as assoillyng savith.<sup>4</sup>  
(General Prologue, 660-661)

<sup>1</sup>The text has been edited and translated by H. Caplan in the Harvard Loeb Classical Library editions. For a discussion of the Rhetorica, see Curtius, pp. 278ff.

<sup>2</sup>French text from Goldin, op. cit., p. 44, ll. 29-30; translation, p. 45: "the courtliest man can become a churl, and any churl a courtly man." Dragonetti supplies examples from Thibaut de Champagne and his trouvères on pages 40-41.

<sup>3</sup>  
I would by speaking enamor the people,  
And I don't want to speak so loftily. . . .  
For it's not a thing to speak of with anyone else.  
Italian text from Wilhelm, p. 395.

<sup>4</sup>assoillyng savith: salvation saves.

Homophonous correspondences, in Chaucer:

For sondry scoles maken sotile clerkis;  
 Womman of manye scoles half a clerk is.  
 (The Merchant's Tale, 1427-8)

In Dafydd ap Gwilym:

awyr erwyr ("quiet sky;" GDG 24, 7)  
 heirdd feirdd ("beautiful bards;" GDG 121, 1)

And in Gruffudd Gryg where cynghanedd plays no part:<sup>1</sup>

Gweli . . . /Gwely ("gash, bed;" DGG p. 137, 9-10)  
 Hael . . . /Haul ("generous, sun;" DDG p. 132, 41-42).

Dafydd ap Gwilym also applies annominatio to words of the same derivation:

Prydydd i Forfudd wyf fi,  
Prid o swydd, prydais iddi.  
 (GDG 106, 1-2)

("Poet to Morfudd I am,  
 Valuable office, I have fashioned verse for her.")

Iolo Goch's Marwnad Meibion Tudur ap Gronwy (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 18) extends the  
annominatio across several lines:<sup>2</sup>

colli : cyllaig ("losing:champion;" p. 20, 1. 3)  
 call : cuall ("wise:sudden;" p. 20, 1. 4)  
 cellan : coll ("little cell:loss;" p. 20, 1. 5)  
 cell : Celliwig ("cell:Celliwig;" p. 20, 1. 6)

<sup>1</sup>Compare Dafydd's Morfudd Fel Yr Haul (GDG 42) where the homophonous words appear initially in successive lines: gorllwyn : gorlliw ("I wait for:brilliance;" 1-2); pell : pêl ("unimaginable [so pell is used in this context] : ball;" 39-40), etc.

<sup>2</sup>Annominatio merges here with cynghanedd.



Another notable example includes Dafydd ap Gwilym's:<sup>1</sup>

Cadwaf fi di . . . / Cedwid Duw y ceidwad tau.  
(GDG 143, 5-6)  
("I keep you . . . may God keep your keeper.")

Conduplicatio, repetition of a word for emphasis or evocation of emotion recurs through most medieval poetry. Alcuin's Versus de Cuculo<sup>2</sup> repeats cuculus (or an inflected form of it) fifteen times in twenty-eight lines. Bernart de Ventadorn's Can l'erba fresch' e·lh folha par stresses the joy of love by the frequent repetition of joi:

joi ai de lui, e joi ai de la flor  
e joi de me e de midons major;  
daus totas partz sui de joi claus e sens,  
mas sel es jois que totz autres jois vens.<sup>3</sup>

Note Chaucer's tripled use of conduplicatio in the following passage from Troilus and Criseyde:

. . . than sey I this,  
That he mot siten by necessite;  
And thus necessite in eyther is.  
For in hym nede of sittynge is, ywys,  
And in the nede of soth, and thus, for sothe,  
There mot necessite ben in you bothe.  
(IV, 1031-1036)

<sup>1</sup>Parry, in his History of Welsh Literature, has found the awdl by Dafydd Nanmor to Rhys ap Maredudd of the Tywyn in Cardiganshire "interesting and rather uncommon" in some respects; namely, in the cymeriad repetition of bryn which links stanza four to stanza five, because "the word has the same form but a different sense; bryn ('hill') a noun in the geographical sense, is found in the first englyn, but in ef a bryn ('he buys') the word is a verb," pp. 138-139). The "uncommon" and "interesting" usage is an example of annominatio.

<sup>2</sup>Waddell, Medieval Latin Lyrics, p. 88.

<sup>3</sup>Text and translation in Goldin, op. cit., pp. 138-139. "I have joy in it, and joy in the flower, and joy in myself, and in my lady most of all; on every side I am enclosed and girded with joy, and a joy that overwhelms all other joys."

The cywyddwyr rely on conduplicatio in the elegies to achieve pathos:

marw (GDG 11, lines 3, 4, 7, 8)

och (GDG 17, lines 2, 4, 8, 10, 15, 17, 19)

Examples of conduplicatio used for emphatic statement are numerous; some examples will indicate the range of use. Dafydd ap Gwilym stresses his lady's fairness (GDG 51) by the repetition of gwen - gwyn six times in the space of six lines (29-34). In a cywydd appropriately titled Doe (GDG 131) by Parry, Dafydd plays on echdoe ("the day before yesterday") and doe ("yesterday") ten times in twelve lines (1-12).

It is found, along with antithesis, in the concluding lines of Dafydd's Marwnad Gruffudd Gryg (GDG 20):

Edn glwys ei baradwyslef,  
Ederyn oedd o dir nef.  
O nef y doeth, goeth gethlydd . . .  
I nef, gwiw oedd ef, ydd aeth.  
(61-66)

(Trans: Comely bird whose cry was paradisaical, he was a bird from the land of heaven. From heaven he came, pure warbler . . . to heaven he has gone; he was worthy.)

Iolo Goch's Marwnad Tudur Fychan (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 12) heightens the emotional effect of his elegy by repeated reference to his bereavement:

Dwyn llew Brynbyrddau . . .  
Dygn ymchwel dwyn Hywel hardd,  
Ys gwaeth dwyn brawdfaeth brudfardd.  
(27-30)

(Trans: The taking of the lion of Bryn Byrddau . . . the taking of comely Hywel was a severe reversal, worse was the taking of a foster-brother of a prophetic poet.")

This passage also employs circumlocution (circuitio) in developing the idea and pronominatio: Hywel hardd, a reference to a tenth-century king of Gwynedd; apt, because Tudur Fychan was a noble from Gwynedd.

Gruffudd Llwyd (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 128) scatters the word barf ("beard") through his poem eleven times. Dafydd ap Gwilym's cywydd to May (GDG 23) provides an elaborate example of conduplicatio as well as of a number of other conceits (e. g., interrogatio, personal metaphor, personification, syntactic parallelism). Or, his Diolch am Fenig (GDG 9):

Menig o'i dref a gefais,  
Nid fal menig Seisnig Sais;  
Menig pur galennig pŵr,  
Mwyn gyfoeth menig Ifor;  
Menig pendefig Dafydd.  
(55-59)

(Trans: The gloves I got from his homestead are not like the English gloves of an Englishman; the fine gloves, New Year's gift, of a lord, a delightful treasure is Ifor's gloves; the gloves of Dafydd's prince.")

Finally, we might look at Dafydd's Morfudd Fel Yr Haul (GDG 42), perhaps his most stylized and most finished effort, which includes a range of rhetorical figures,<sup>1</sup> and affords an example of conduplicatio as well:

<sup>1</sup>For example, traductio for thematic emphasis: y mae golau (3), goleuach (4), goleudon (5), goleuder (6) - all insisting on Morfudd's brightness. Cymeriad llythrennol runs through the first fourteen lines, while the first ten lines are a circuitio statement which reduce to "she is brighter than any number of bright things are bright." Both this series of lines and lines 15-24 are full of similes and descriptive epithets. Personal metaphor is frequent (e. g., Morfudd is "the shepherdess of the sky," bugeiles wybr; l. 30). Lines 27-44 form an exemplum in which Morfudd is portrayed as the sun journeying through heaven; this is accompanied by dramatic descriptions of warring clouds and flight. Annominatio occurs in ll. 39-40, as we have already pointed out, and antithesis in ll. 53-54 (peunydd : pheunoeth; "daily:nightly"), phrasal circuitio (y nos pan ddaw; "when night comes," l. 36; hyd y llawr dirfawr derfyn/Haul a ddaw; "down to earth of vast bounds the sun comes," ll. 27-28 and, ar gylch i bedwar bylch byd; "circling the earth's four corners," l. 68. Also, interrogatio: Paham. . . .

Os tecaf un eleni,  
Tecaf, hil naf, ein haul ni.  
 (61-62)

(Trans: If one this year's the fairest, fairest, lord's lineage,  
 is our sun.")

Contentio, the contrast of ideas expressed by parallelism and strongly contrasted words or phrases (also known as antithesis or contrarium) was considered an ornata facilitas (Geoffrey, Poetria, ll. 103-104; Faral, p. 231). Guillaume IX combines it with conduplicatio (in his use of conosc) and membrum:

Ieu conosc ben sen e folhor,  
 e conosc anta et honor,  
 et ai ardimen e paor.<sup>1</sup>

Chaucer describes the Clerk and his horse in the General Prologue:

As leene was his hors as is a rake,  
 And he was nat right fat, I undertake.  
 (287-288)

We find contentio in Dafydd's work; in the Marwnad Gruffudd Gryg which we have already singled out for its use of conduplicatio, Dafydd juxtaposes doeth and aeth in "from heaven he came, to heaven he has gone" (O nef y doeth. . . . / . . . ydd aeth). Elsewhere he uses it effectively in his description of Dyddgu (GDG 45):

Gwyn yw'r tal . . .  
Du yw'r gwallt. . . .  
 (27-28)  
 ("White is her forehead, black is her hair.")

<sup>1</sup>Text and translation in Goldin, op. cit., pp. 34-35. "I know what wisdom is, and foolishness, and I know what honor is, and shame, I can tell bravery and fear."

His Cywydd i Ifor Hael, which has provided many of the examples in this discussion, also provides an example of this figure:

Myned o'm gwlad . . . /. . . a dyfod, Ifor.  
(GDG 7, 21-22)  
("I go from my land . . . and come, Ifor.")

Before leaving figures of speech, we might turn to Iolo Goch's Marwnad Tudur Fychan (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 12) to demonstrate its dominant rhetorical effects. We have cited some of the techniques already (e. g., conduplicatio, in lines 27, 29, 30) and mentioned that the elegiac verse tends to be heavily rhetorical. Here we can observe several techniques within a passage of one poem.

Clywais doe im clust deau  
Canu corn cyfeiliorn cau.  
Wi o Dduw, a wyf ddiorn,  
Pa beth yw y gyfryw gorn?  
Galargyrn mechdeyrn Môn. . . .  
Pa dwrw yw hwn . . .  
Pa ymffust i'm clust fal cloch?  
Marw gychwedl pencenedl coeth. . . .  
Gytgerdd rhwng cloch ac utgorn.  
Pa weiddi - pwy a wyddiad -  
Yw hwn a glywnn i'n gwlad?  
Ubain a llefain rhag llid  
Am y gŵr mwya' gerid. . . .  
Llygrwyd Môn, myn llaw Egryn,  
Llygrwyd oll lle gorau dyn;  
Llygrwyd Cymry gwedy gwart.  
(1-23)

(Yesterday I heard, in my right ear, a trumpet's note, hollow and straying.

O God, am I blameless, what is behind such a trumpet? Horns of grief  
for Mon's overlord. . . . What tumult is this? . . . What contention  
that is like a bell in my ears? News of the excellent chief's death. . .  
Unison sung between bell and trumpet. What outcry - who could know -  
is this we hear in our land? Moaning and crying from emotion for the

man who was most loved. . . . Mon has been destroyed, [I swear] by the hand of Egryn, man's best place has been destroyed completely; Wales has been destroyed after [the death of its] guardian.")

The entire opening sequence is developed through interpretatio, while emotion is evoked through the exclamatio in line 3, and the series of rationcinatio (4-5; 7-8; 15-16) which leads into impassioned laments posed as answers to the rhetorical questions. Conduplicatio emphasizes the audible, public manifestation of grief: clywais (1), clust (1), clust (8); and the thematic repetition of horn: corn (2), corn (4), galargyrn (5), utgorn (14) underlines the clamorous expression of that grief. Repetitio, always effective in elegies for the dirge-like quality it imparts, is used here not for a sonorous effect, but for harshness: llygrwyd (21-23).

The application of medieval rhetoric to vernacular as well as Latin literature encompassed more than the contrived use of figures and tropes. Certain "topics" or themes known as topoi (equivalent to English "common-places") were indisputably rhetorical in basis. Originally regarded as aids to composition, they made their way into all literary genres and became clichés "spreading to all spheres of life with which literature deals and to which it gives form."<sup>1</sup> Among the panegyric topoi were the praise of forbearers and their deeds which we have examined in Chapter II, noting some of the fixed schemata attached to praise of the hero. While rhetoric conveyed the picture of the ideal man it also determined the ideal

<sup>1</sup>

Curtius, op. cit., p. 70.

landscape of poetry as we will see in the following chapter. The locus amoenus was subjected to conceptual schematization, governing the choice of natural phenomena and the descriptive arrangement. Other topoi, such as vituperative descriptions, or praise of courts and places (descriptio loci) are found regularly throughout the narrative and lyric poetry of the Middle Ages. We now turn to a discussion of some of the major topoi that appear in the work of the medieval Welsh bards.



## Chapter IV

RHETORICAL TOPICS

Critics in the past have sought to establish the relationship of Dafydd ap Gwilym with continental influence.<sup>1</sup> Their analyses, though somewhat narrowly concerned with the thematic appearance and treatment of love in the poetry of Dafydd ap Gwilym, brought Welsh literary studies to the threshold of comparative literary criticism. This chapter will offer a further insight into the fusion of native and external traditions reflected in the poetry of several medieval Welsh poets by examining some of the major topoi that appear in their work. Some of these topoi, or stock topics, were especially to be found in the introductory passages of the poem, others could intrude at any point in the poem, others in the conclusion, while still others might be developed throughout the entire poem, and hence form the principal theme of the verse.

<sup>1</sup>For instance: R. Bromwich ["Tradition and Innovation in the Poetry of Dafydd ap Gwilym," Trans. Hon. Soc. Cymm. (1967)], has cogently and impressively reviewed the arguments for foreign influences, adding to them her own substantial and original scholarship. Dr. Bromwich includes in her discussion references to the major criticism in this area, and here we need only single out the most important. Theodor Chotzen, Recherches sur la Poésie de Dafydd ap Gwilym (Amsterdam, 1927); Ifor Williams, "Dafydd ap Gwilym a'r Glêr," Trans. Hon. Soc. Cymm. (1913-1914), pp. 83-204; and L. C. Stern, "Dafydd ab Gwilym, ein walisischer Minnesanger," ZCP, VII (1909-10), pp. 1-251. The wider medieval backgrounds of the love poetry have more recently been discussed in a series of Gregynog lectures edited by John Rowlands under the title, Dafydd ap Gwilym A Chanu Serch (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, and Coleg Prifysgol Dewi Sant, 1975). We will turn to this subject in the final chapter.

Topos: The Locus Amoenus

In Chapter II we reviewed the particular ways in which Welsh panegyric verse was broadened to include the chivalric ideals and vocabulary of the high Middle ages. Just as rhetoric established a schema of panegyric topics, so it set the ideal landscape which meets us everywhere in medieval poetry. This ideal landscape took the form of the locus amoenus which was given rhetorical expression in the descriptio loci.<sup>1</sup> Its features greatly influenced by Virgil and Ovid, the locus amoenus, and its description, was accorded a prominent place by medieval writers on style, while examples of it proliferate in the artes poétiques from 1170 on.<sup>2</sup> Matthew of Vendôme exemplifies its treatment in his section on rhetorical amplificatio.<sup>3</sup> Peter Riga (d. 1209) devotes an entire poem to its description.<sup>4</sup> Earlier, Virgil in his Bucolics, and Ovid<sup>5</sup> in his Fasti (as well as scattered elsewhere throughout his verse), established rhetorical occasions for the

<sup>1</sup>The garden (or bower or plaisaunce) provides, according to Curtius, the principal motif of all nature description from classical Antiquity until Spenser. See Curtius' excellent and seminal treatment of this topic, in his authoritative European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages (New York: Pantheon, 1953), pp. 183-200.

<sup>2</sup>Curtius, fn. 23, p. 197.

<sup>3</sup>In E. Faral, Les Arts Poétiques du XII<sup>e</sup> et du XIII<sup>e</sup> Siècle (Paris, 1934), p. 148.

<sup>4</sup>De ornata mundi, PL, CLXXI, 1235ff.

<sup>5</sup>From Virgil the Middle Ages adopted a series of nature topoi, including the locus amoenus and the "mixed forest." The flowery meadows, the motif of bucolic repose and the paraphernalia of the bower are germinal to Virgil's poetry. In Ovid the descriptions of the poetic landscape become dominated by rhetoric from whence highly mannered descriptions pass into the Middle Ages until in the work of his successors they become "bravura interludes" according to Curtius, p. 194.

description of nature. It is not surprising to find the locus amoenus appearing as a stock feature in pastoral and erotic poetry, passing easily into the work of the Goliardic poets and into the vernacular love-poetry of medieval Europe.

The affinities of medieval Welsh descriptions of the *plaisaunce* with Latin and continental models have not yet been appreciated. Though not wishing to minimize the correspondences, I would add at once that the Welsh *plaisaunce* might more accurately be pictured as "an imaginary garden with real toads in it," to borrow a phrase from Marianne Moore. That is, that while Welsh poetic descriptions of the locus amoenus certainly fall well within the tradition of medieval practice they secure their own native habitation by particularization of detail that distinguishes the Welsh garden from its continental counterpart. Welsh poetry exploits the native birch, broom, and holly, carefully, perhaps deliberately, avoiding foreign and exotic flora and fauna. It excels in the economic and striking use of metaphor and simile for descriptive emphasis; and though not all details of imagery are unique to the Welsh poets, those extraneous to Welsh tradition are subordinate accessories. Nonetheless, what is important is how fully established in Welsh poetry certain topics had become. To perceive in isolation one example, or several, of rhetorical techniques, or but an occasional example of a borrowed topic is not to appreciate the extent to which Welsh poetry participated in the Latin Middle Ages.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Bromwich's remarks on the question of literary influence are well taken and bear expression here: "It seems unlikely that Dafydd and his contemporaries in following certain of the poetic devices of the clêr. . . , should at the same time have wholly neglected the kinds of subject-matter. . . ." "And thus it is that perhaps the greatest of all the problems concerning the manner in which foreign literary influences reached Dafydd ap Gwilym. . . is that of determining how far this subject-matter included themes of ultimate French origins, and to what extent these themes were already established in Welsh poetry in the fourteenth century." Bromwich, op. cit., p. 48.

The essential features of the garden<sup>1</sup> as it came down from Virgil and Ovid were: a beautiful, natural site (not cultivated for practical purposes), a meadow or clearing, a tree (or several); and, in fact, in medieval practice it was usually several or many, a brook, bird-song. Additional features, regularly found in medieval poetry, though not essential in classical, included a soft breeze, flowers, woodland and shade. Typically, and inevitably, seasonal ascriptions appear. Consequently, there is conflation of several topoi: the plaisaunce, description of the spring or summer season, and love poetry. Because of this aggregate of descriptio loci, description of the spring or summer season, and the catalogue of nature's "delights" (specifically those of the locus amoenus), these poems may be mistaken for Nature poetry. This is, formally speaking, not the case.<sup>2</sup> In the love poetry the thoughts on spring (or summer) are stylized conventions, as is the opening description of nature. Together they form a standard introductory topos which is found regularly in the Latin, Romance, English, and German lyric.

The love lyrics of the Carmina Burana, for example, place the topic of the locus amoenus within its special milieu and its time. Musa venit carmine makes the locus amoenus the lovers' bower and furnishes it with

<sup>1</sup> In the Welsh poetry it is a luscious wood.

<sup>2</sup> Gwyn Williams, discussing the "nature poetry" of the Black Book of Carmarthen, cautions us not to mistake the descriptions of nature in early Welsh verse as nature poetry, properly speaking, arguing that "there is little description of nature for nature's sake in old Welsh poetry. Landscape, birds and the weather are used for different purposes, sometimes to establish a mood, at other times to suggest contrasts, or to provide padding of a pretty kind." (Introduction to Welsh Poetry, Faber & Faber, 1953), p. 48. The comparison of earlier treatments of nature with fourteenth-century habits might reward investigation, for there is a discernible difference between Cynfeirdd and Gogynfeirdd practice as seen in Gwâlchmei and Hywel ab Owain. These two are often closer to the cywyddwyr than to many of their contemporaries.

the conventional features itemized above.<sup>1</sup>

Musa venit carmine,  
dulci modulamine:  
pariter cantemus,  
ecce virent omnia,  
prata, rus et nemus,  
mane garrit alaudula,  
lupilulat cornicula,  
iubente natura  
philomena queritur  
antique de iactura.

Hirundo iam finsat,  
cignus dulce trinsat  
memorando fata,  
cuculat et cuculus  
per nemora vernata.

Pulchre canunt volucres.  
nitet terre facies  
vario colore,  
et in partum solvitur  
redolens odore.

Late pandit tilia,  
frondes, ramos, folia,  
thymus est sub ea,  
viridi cum gramine,  
in quo fit chorea.

Patet et in gramine  
iocundo rivus murmure.  
locus est festivus,  
ventus cum temperie  
susurrat tempestivus.

(The muse comes with song, and pleasant measure; sing we together, all things are green; meadows, countryside and wood, the lark chatters at morning, young crows cawing, and as nature urges, Philomel laments her ancient wrong. The swallow now trills, the agreeable swan is shrill remembering its lot; the cuckoo cuckoos through the green grove. Birds

<sup>1</sup>Helen Waddell, ed., Medieval Latin Lyrics (Penguin; repr. 1968), pp. 250ff. Used extensively by the Goliardic poets, this convention is met in almost any love-lyric set in spring. One might compare, for instance, the majority of the poems from the Benedicteuren MS. edited by Waddell or the lyrics in the Goliard Poets, ed. G. Whicher (New Directions; New York, 1949), pp. 162-220.

sing beautifully, earth is shining in her multi-colored form, and freed after birth she sends forth fragrance. The lime-tree spreads its broad foliage, bough and leaf, with thyme under it [and] green grass where the dance is held. In the grass the stream lies open, merrily murmuring; a pleasing place it is, [where] the seasonable wind mildly whispers.)

The Garden of Love in the Roman de la Rose<sup>1</sup> incorporates and amplifies the standard topic. Too long to quote in full, passages with corresponding details will have to be singled out.

et sachiez que je cuidai estre  
por voir em paradis terrestre:  
tant estoit li leus delitables,  
qu'i sembloit estre esperitables;  
car, si come lors m'ert avis,  
il ne fet en nul paradis  
si bon estre com il fessoit  
el vergier, qui tant me plesoit.  
D'oisiaus chantanz avoit assez  
par tot le vergier amassez:  
en un leu avoit rosigniaus,  
d'autre part jais et estorniaus,  
si ravoit aillors granz escoles  
de roetiaus et de turtoles,  
de chardoneriaus, d'arondeles,  
d'aloes et de lardereles;

(633-648)

Trop par fessoient bel servise  
cil oisel que je vos devise.  
Il chantoient un chant autel  
con fussent angre esperitel;  
et bien sachiez, quant je l'oi,  
que durement m'en esjoi,  
que mes si douce meloudie  
ne fu d'ome mortel oie.  
Tant estoit cil chanz doz et biaux  
qu'il ne sembloit pas chant d'oisiaus,  
ainz le peust l'en aesmer  
au chanz des seraines de mer,  
qui par lor voiz qu'eles ont saines  
et series ont non seraines.

<sup>1</sup>Guillaume de Lorris et Jean de Meun, Le Roman de la Rose, ed. Felix Lecoy (Paris, 1970), pp. 20-22.



A chanter furent ententif  
 li oiselet, qui aprentif  
 ne furent pas ne non sachant;  
 si sachiez. . . .  
 (659-676)

Grant servise et doz et plesant  
 aloient li oisel fesant;  
 lais d'amors et sonoiz cortois  
 chantoient en lor serventois,  
 li un en haut, li autre en bas.  
 De lor chant, n'estoit mie gas,  
 la doucor et las melodie  
 me mist el cuer grant reverdie.  
 (699-706)

(Trans: You might well believe I thought the place was truly a terrestrial paradise, for so delightful was the scenery that it looked heavenly; it seemed to me a better place than Eden for delight, so much the orchard did my senses please. The singing birds throughout the garden thronged: here were the nightingales, and there the larks; here were the starlings, and the jays were there; here were the turtledoves, and there the wrens; here were the goldfinches, and there the doves; here were the thrushes, and the tomtits there.)<sup>1</sup>

(A service meet, as I have told you, all these birds performed; for such a song they sang as angels sing. And sang it, truly, to my great delight. No mortal man e'er heard a fairer tune. So soft and sweetly pealed their melody that, if a man comaparison should seek, it seemed no hymn of birds, but mermaids' song, who for their voices clear, serene, and pure are Sirens called. These birds were not unskilled apprentices but tuneful journeymen, and to their craft they gave their greatest care. You may well know that. . . .)<sup>2</sup>

(The birds kept on performing all their rites; sweetly and pleasantly they sang of love and chanted sonnets courteously and well. In part songs joining, one sang high, one low. Their singing was beyond reproach; their notes with sweetness and contentment filled my heart.)<sup>3</sup>

To this is added an extensive catalogue of the varieties of trees, exotic spices, herbs and flowers that need not be detailed here.

<sup>1</sup>Translation by Harry W. Robbins, The Romance of the Rose (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1962), p. 14.

<sup>2</sup>Robbins, p. 15.

<sup>3</sup>Robbins, p. 15.



Instead, it will be sufficient to cite those lines which have correspondences in Welsh and other European vernaculars. For instance, the description of the intertwined boughs which form a canopy, the reference to the animals in the garden and the presence of the stream which characterizes the locus amoenus:

mel li rain furent lonc et haut,  
 et por le leu garder de chaut  
 furent si espes par deseure  
 que li solaus a nes une eure  
 ne fere mal a l'erbe tendre.  
 El vergier ot dains et chevriaus,  
 si ot grant plante d'escuriaus  
 qui p' ces arbres gravissoient.  
 (1367-1375)

Entor les ruisiaus et les rives  
 des fontaines cleres et vives  
 poignoit l'erbe freschete et drue:  
 ausi i pooit l'en sa drue  
 couchier come sus un coute  
 car la terre est et douz et moute.

(1389-1394)

(Trans: The branches were so long and high that for defense against the heat they knit together at the tops and kept the sun from shining through upon the ground and injuring the tender, growing grass.)<sup>1</sup>

(About the streamlets and the fountain brinks, beside the waters bright and frolicsome, the grass was short and thick, where one might lie beside his sweetheart as upon a couch.)<sup>2</sup>

Before turning to other parallels in the European vernaculars which indicate the contemporary availability of this topos, one might refer to Mrs. Bromwich's remarks on the possible influence of the Roman de la Rose

<sup>1</sup>Robbins, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup>Robbins, p. 18.

on Dafydd ap Gwilym.<sup>1</sup> Reviewing its symptoms of courtly love and applying them to the work of Dafydd, Mrs. Bromwich reviews a number of motifs (Eiddig, the association of May with youth and love, the old woman in Tri Porthor Eiddig, and certain similes) which suggest an indebtedness to the RR. Certainly the evidence she isolates strongly suggests Dafydd's familiarity with the French tradition. Well taken, too, are her remarks on the significance of the RR which "was not an isolated work, [but]. . . the culminating expression of a whole trend or tradition in thirteenth-century French poetry, from which it sprang, and which continued to exist alongside of it" (p. 31). To this we might add that the Latin lyrics, examples of which have been cited above, must be seen as representing an equally strong and equally well-established tradition that predates the RR, and to which the RR was itself indebted. Dronke, commenting on the topos of love and nature in medieval Latin lyrics, observes that the Latin lyrics "show affinities that must be far more than casual to their counterparts in the European vernaculars."<sup>2</sup> It is at this point, unprofitable to engage in either/or arguments, either Latin, or French; and, ultimately, were such resolution possible, it would not enhance our critical appreciation of the literary value of the lyrics themselves, though, of course, it would advance our appreciation of the cultural assumptions and historical framework.

<sup>1</sup> Rachel Bromwich, "Tradition and Innovation," op. cit.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Dronke, Medieval Latin and the Rise of the European Love-Lyric, Vol. I (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1965), p. 285.

The Minnesang, borrowing closely from the Provencal, regularly incorporate introductory references to nature into their love poetry. Although one finds the conventional rose, linde, nahtegal and Meie, cataloguing in greater detail is uncommon.<sup>1</sup> Here, the mere suggestion invokes the convention and need not overpromote it.

Typical use of the topos is made by Marcabrun, Bertran de Born, Bernart de Ventadorn, and the troubadours generally. Marcabrun's "A la fontana del vergier"<sup>2</sup> opens:

A la fontana del vergier,  
Ou l'erb' es vertz josta.l gravier,  
A l'ombra d'un fust domesgier,  
En aiziment de blancas flors  
E de novelh chant costumier. . . .

In English, the convention is represented in the Harley lyrics and in Chaucer's Parlement of Foules. Here, as elsewhere, Chaucer's poetry offers a convenient microcosm of popular medieval literary traditions. His Parlement of Foules shares recognized affinities with his source, Boccaccio's Il Teseida, while Boccaccio's editors and critics underscore, in turn, his debt to the Roman de la Rose. This, should we need any reminding, reflects what we well know of the extensive transmission of motifs and ideas and the derivative nature of medieval composition.

<sup>1</sup>See, particularly, Dietman von Eist, "ûf der linden obene dâ sanc ein kleinez vogellîn"; Reinmar von Hagenau, "Ich sach vil wunneclîchen stân die herde mit den bluomen rô"; and Walther von der Vogelweide, "Under der linden" in Des Minnesangs Fruhling, ed. Karl Lachman u. Moriz (Leipzig, 1857), re-ed. by Carl von Kraus, 1954 (Berline, 1936).

<sup>2</sup>(Trans: In the garden by a stream along the sand where grass is green, under the shade of an orchard tree with white flowers for enjoyment, and the renewed song of the bedecked season. In Medieval Song, ed. and trans., James J. Wilhelm (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1971), p. 387.

That Wales could have escaped certain of the most prominent modes and topoi of the Middle Ages is unlikely. But before we turn to the Welsh poetry, we might look at Chaucer's description of the garden:

A gardyn saw I ful of blosmy bowes  
 Upon a ryver, in a grene mede,  
 There as swetnesse evermore inow is,  
 With floures white, blewe, yelwe, and rede,  
 And colde welle-stremes, nothyng dede. . . .

On every bow the bryddes herde I synge,  
 With voys of aungel in here armonye;  
 Some besyede hem here bryddes forth to brynge. . . .  
 And ferther al aboute I gan aspye  
 The dredful ro, the buk, the hert and hynde. . .  
 (183-195)

Of instruments of strenges in acord  
 Herde I so pleye a ravyshyng swetnesse,  
 That God, that makere is of al and lord,  
 Ne herde nevere beter, as I gesse.  
 Therwith a wynd, unnethe it myghte be lesse,  
 Made in the leves grene a noyse softe  
 Acordaunt to the foules song alofte.  
 (197-203)<sup>1</sup>

If we now look at some of the Welsh lyrics, we shall see affinities with the Latin, French and English that can scarcely be regarded as random or incidental. Here we find what appears to be deliberate use of the topos of the garden which is not represented in early Welsh tradition. Moreover, such an examination of Welsh practice, in terms of a wider medieval context, will serve to modify some earlier views on Dafydd's practice in particular. Saunders Lewis, for instance, in his Braslun judged Dafydd's conception of the leafy llys a striking individual application unprecedented in earlier Welsh convention. While it may

<sup>1</sup>F. Robinson, ed. The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer (Houghton Mifflin; Boston, 1957), pp. 312-313.

have been unprecedented in Welsh, and while it may have been "personally characteristic" of Dafydd (as Dr. Bromwich and Dr. Parry would argue),<sup>1</sup> it is a topos that has its ultimate roots in the Latin rhetorical tradition.

Dafydd's I Wahodd Dyddgu (GDG 119) has marked parallels with the lyrics cited above. The plaisaunceto to which he invites Dyddgu possesses the conventional features: a concealed site (lle nid hysbys; "a place unknown," l. 39); several species of bird and bird-song receiving particularized detail (Eos gefnllwyd ysgafnllef /A bronfraith ddigrifiaith gref; "a grey-backed, light-voiced nightingale, and a vigorous thrush of pleasant speech," ll. 15-16), and, later, the reference to the black-birds and hawks; trees (not only the birch, but trees hyperbolically amplified to nawpren teg eu hwynepryd - "nine trees, fair their countenance," l. 23; and, under the trees, clover (cf. Musa venit carmine, op. cit., p. 5 and the description of the broad-leaved tree with thyme growing under it). The description of the locus as "cool" (lle goer) is strong evidence of non-native influences. Coolness and shade are reasonable requisites for a Mediterranean poet's bower<sup>2</sup> but hardly a requirement to a poet in the North. Finally, notice the reference to roebucks in line 31, and note a similar appearance in Chaucer's PF, and the RR. The relevant lines of Dafydd's cywydd may be compared with Musa venit carmine as well:

<sup>1</sup>A History of Welsh Literature, H. I. Bell, trans. (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1955), pp. 108-112.

<sup>2</sup>This point has been recognized by Curtius; stock references to the motif of coolness may be found in: Appendix Vergiliana (p. 13) Ausonius (p. 37) and Alcuin (p. 97) all in Waddell's Medieval Latin Lyrics, op. cit.

Nid addawaf, da ddiwedd,  
 I'm aur ond eos a medd;  
 Eos gefnllwyd ysgafnllef  
 A bronfraith ddigrifiaith gref.  
 Ygus dwf, ac ystafell  
 O fedw ir, a fu dŷ well?  
 Tra fôm allan dan y dail,  
 Ein ceinnerth fedw a'n cynnail  
 Llofft i'r adar i chwarae,  
 Llwyn mwyn, llyna'r llun y mae.  
 Nawpren teg eu hwynepryd  
 Y sydd o goedydd i gyd,  
 I waered yn grwm gwmpas,  
 I fynny yn glochdy glas.  
 I danun', eiddun addef,  
 Meillion ir, ymellin nef.

Lle deuddyn, llu a'u diddawr,  
 Neu dri yn ennyd yr awr.  
 Lle y cyrch ieirch, rywioceirch ryw,  
 Lle y cân edn, lle cain ydyw.  
 Lle tew lletyau mwyeilch,  
 Lle mygr gwŷdd, lle y megir gwēilch,  
 Lle newydd adeilwydd da,  
 Lle nwyf aml, lle nef yma.  
 Lle golau rhwyl, lle gwyl gwg.  
 Lle gar dwfr, lle goer difwg.  
 Lle nid hysbys, dyrys dir,  
 Blotai neu gawsai goesir.  
 (13-40)

(Trans: I do not promise myself gold, but - good conclusion- a nightingale and mead; the grey-backed, light-voiced nightingale and the vigorous thrush of pleasant speech. Lowering growth and a chamber of green birches; was there ever a better house? While we're outside under the leaves, our lovely sturdy birches will protect us. Loft for birds to play in, precious grove, that is the manner of place it is. Nine trees, fair their countenance, are the whole of the woods. Below, a compact circle; above, a green belfry. Under them, desirable dwelling, fresh clover, manna of heaven. Place for a couple, the mob does not concern them - or three - for the space of an hour. Where roebucks bred on oats haunt, where birds sing, it is a fair place. A thick [-leaved] place for the lodgings of blackbirds, bright place of trees, place where hawks are reared. A fresh place of good timbers, a place of frequent passion, this is a heavenly place. Place of a pale green palace, place where wrath is abashed. Place near water, cool smokeless place. Unknown place, tangled spot, for a long-legged beggar of cheese or meal.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Such an invitation to an earthly paradise has marked affinities with the Song of Songs. The promise of mead, the seclusion, the birds and the water, the appointments of the garden were such as filtered down into the vernacular descriptions. See, for instance, January's invitation to May in the Merchant's Tale (ll. 2029-2037; 2136-2146), and the Epistolarium of Boncampagno (printed by Dronke in Medieval Latin and the . . . European Love Lyric, II, 483ff).

The descriptio loci is at the center of Dafydd's Offeren y Llwyn (GDG 122). The elaborate conceit depicting the songs of the birds as sacral liturgy is but a component of the topos of the plaisance, and, in fact, brings the poem closer to the conception of amor courtois as a religion than a vast number of troubadour lyrics ever do. The milieu is conventional: the pleasant, natural, secluded spot in which birds and the whole of nature share the rapture of spring. Parallels are numerous, but one might point out the two Harley lyrics, Alisoun and Lenten ys come wip loue to toune, and, perhaps, the Goliardic Vestiunt silve,<sup>1</sup> which elaborate on and particularize the songs of the birds in terms of poetic and linguistic modes. In the Goliardic lyric the wood-pigeon voices a lingering poetic song: palumbres/ carmina cunctis. The thrush, the blackbirds and the nightingale, the lark and the eagle are accorded particular lyrical expression in Vestiunt silve:

Hic turtur gemit, resonat hic turdus,  
pangit hic priscos merula sonores;

Hic leta canit philomela frondis,  
longas effundit sibilum per auras  
sollempne;

. . . .in auris  
alauda canit, modulos resolvit,  
de sursum vergit dissimili modo,  
dum terram tangit.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Vestiunt silve, The Goliard Poets, G. Whicher, ed. and trans. (New York, 1949), p. 18. The Harley lyrics appear as nos. 4 and 11 respectively in Brook's edition, op. cit.

<sup>2</sup>(Here the turtledove sighs, here the thrush resounds, here the blackbird composes his ancient sounds. Here, glad in the leaves the nightingale is singing, pouring out on the winds far carrying a solemn whistle. . . . audible the lark's singing, she releases her regular measures, from on high she swoops down with a different mode, until she touches earth.)



If you look at the second passage from the Roman de la Rose (page 162 above), certain correspondences of description emerge. De Lorris describes the song of the birds as a service meet (bel servise, l. 659) and amplifies their song in terms of its melody and skilled craft. In the following passage, he refers to their song as part-songs, taking their music to be akin to chanted sonnets.

If we now look at Dafydd's cywydd (no. 122), we will see a blend of these conventions: the plaisaunce and the poetic artistry of the bird-song first:

Lle digrif y bûm heddiw  
 Dan fentyll y gwyrddgyll gwiw,  
 Yn gwarando ddechrau dydd  
 Y ceiliog bronfraith celfydd  
 Yn canu englyn alathr,  
 Arwyddion a llithion llathr.

(1-6)

(Trans: Today I was in a delightful place under a mantle of seemly green hazel trees, listening at day's beginning to the skillful cock-thrush sing<sup>ing</sup> a fine englyn, rites and polished lessons.)

Later Dafydd refers to his measured (or, metred) song:

mydr ganiadaeth (14)

and still later, to the bright language and lingering recitation of the birds:

Mi a glywnn mewn gloywiaith  
 Ddatganu, nid methu, maith,  
 Darllain i'r plwyf . . . .

(21-23)

(Trans: I heard a long recitation in bright language, no flagging, a lecture to the parish people.)

There are, in fact, many instances of such descriptions in Dafydd's verse. The song of the cock-thrush (Y Ceiliog Bronfraith, GDG 123) is natural, habitual, for "the thrush sings by [natural] laws:"

Bronfraith drwy gyfraith a gân.  
(6)

as he does in 'Lenten ys come wip loue to toune:

Pe prestelcoc him preteþ oo<sup>1</sup>  
(7)

The cock-thrush, too, is an incessant, "tedious preacher of each language:"

Pregethwr maith pob ieithoedd  
(7)

While his song is the summa of its kind (a convention recognized from the Latin verse and the RR above); "A singer he is of the best kind of song:"

Ceiniad yw goreuryw gân  
(17)

And, should more evidence be necessary to connect Dafydd's garden with the terrestrial paradise, the bird is called "the chief love-poet of Paradise:"

Brydydd serch o Baradwys  
(48)

Thus the explicit connection is made between the plaisance and its delights of greenery and bird-song with the garden of love. In medieval verse such descriptions of bird-song in a lavish natural setting form a

<sup>1</sup>"The song-thrush contends always."

characteristic composite in the garden topos.<sup>1</sup>

As Dafydd develops his theme in this poem other submerged conventional features become more identifiable. His locus amoenus is adorned with blossoms - "About him were ornaments of blossoms of the gentle branches of May."

Amdano yr oedd gasmai  
O flodau mwyn gangau Mai.  
(15-16)

The presence of a soft wind is implicit:

A'i gasul, debygesynt,  
O esgyll, gwyrdd fentyll, gwynt.  
(17-18)

(Trans: And his chasuble, they thought, was the green mantles of the wings of the wind.)

We find further use of the topos in Y Llwyn Celyn (GDG 29) where, again, Dafydd portrays the locus as a secluded, uncultivated spot, "a seemly choir, not uprooted by man:"

Cor gweddaidd nis diwraidd dyn  
(3)

In this poem the garden explicitly exists only for pleasure and love.

Other elements of the traditional stock emerge; it is luxuriant; "the fully laden burden of the holly grove;"

Y celynllwyn coel iawnllwyth  
(1)

<sup>1</sup>In the Middle English Alysoun, and in Cavalcanti's Fresca rosa novella (No. 1 in Guido Cavalcanti Rime, ed. G. Fasti, Napoli, 1957), Dronke sees "the whole of creation" engaged in "a polyphony in which the poet, nature . . . and birds take up the melody and pass it on." op. cit., I, p. 140. It might be noted, too, that all these poems are love poems.

with the added attraction of bright "coral berries":

cwrel ffrwyth  
(2)

Trees are typically present, their description deftly brought forward by a graphic metaphor: "Under the trees, a gentle wood with fine hair."<sup>1</sup>

Dan goedydd, mwynwydd manwallt.  
(8)

Moreover, the grove is specifically "love's throne":

Un gadair serch  
(15)

and "a pantry of song":

pantri cerdd  
(19)

The locus receives more particular association with the terrestrial paradise in:

Trefn<sup>2</sup> adar gwlad Baradwys,  
Teml gron o ddail gleision glwys.  
(29-30)

(Trans: Home of the birds of Paradise;<sup>3</sup> a round temple of fair green leaves.)

<sup>1</sup>The depiction of trees as tressed is a favorite of Dafydd's, competing with the metaphor of trees garbed in mantles. Such images are not unique to him, but appear widely in medieval poetry and in the classical tradition as well. Cf. Vestiunt silve and Musa venit carmine, op. cit.

<sup>2</sup>For the use of trefn meaning "house, room, or abode," see Parry's notes to GDG 63, 7 and 75, 35.

<sup>3</sup>This, of course, is a literal translation, and the reader should not confuse the reference here with the brightly plumed oscine birds of New Guinea and the adjacent islands.

Cyngor y Biogen (GDG 63) illustrates the extent to which the locus amoenus penetrated all manner of lyrical verse. Certainly not the ostensible topic of the poem, the description of the ideal landscape occupies the first thirty-two lines. The joy that Dronke sees as characteristic of love-nature lyrics is present here as the poet records the surge of his joyful spirits and as he beholds the fresh green foliage. The catalogue of bird-song and the lark's flight approximates the Vestiunt silve description and compares with that in Musa venit carmine. The delights of the grove, in short, belong to the tradition of the locus amoenus and the spring season, while the impulse is supplied love.

- 4 A mi'n glaf er mwyn gloywferch,  
 Mewn llwyn ny prydu swyn serch,  
 Ddiwrnawd, pybyrwawd pill,  
 Ddichwerw wybr, ddechrau Ebrill,  
 A'r eos ar ir wiail,  
 A'r fwyalch deg ar fwllch dail -  
 Bardd coed mewn trefngoed y trig -  
 8 A bronfraith ar ir brenfrig  
 Cyn y glaw yn canu'n glau  
 Ar las bancr eurlais bynciau;  
 A'r ehedydd, lonydd lais,  
 12 Cwcyllwyd edn cu callais,  
 Yn myned mewn lludded llwyr  
 Â chywydd i entrych awyr,  
 (O'r noethfaes, edlaes edling,  
 16 Yn wysg ei gefn drefn y dring);  
 Minnau, fardd rhiaian feinir,  
 Yn llawen iawn mewn llwyn ir,  
 A'r galon fradw yn cadw cof,  
 20 A'r enaid yn ir ynof  
 Gan addwyned gweled gwŷdd,  
 Gwaissg nwyf, yn dwyn gwisg newydd,  
 Ac egin gwin a gwenith  
 24 Ar ôl glaw araul a gwllith  
 A dail glas ar dâl y glyn,  
 A'r draenwydd yn ir drwynwyn;  
 Myn y Nef, yr oedd hefyd  
 28 Y bi, ffelaf edn o'r byd,  
 Yn adeilad, brad brydferth,  
 Yn nhalgrychedd perfedd perth,  
 O ddail a phriddgalch, balch borth,  
 32 A'i chymar yn ei chymorth.

(Trans: Sick for the sake of my bright girl, I was in a grove one day, sweet the sky, composing a love charm, a bright bit of poetry, at the beginning of April. The nightingale on the green twigs, and the comely blackbird on the leafy battlement - bard of the wood in his woodland dwelling - and the thrush in the verdant tapestry of the tree tops loudly singing his golden-voiced notes before the rain; and the lark, soft-voiced, the dear grey-hooded bird of crafty voice, soaring, utterly exerted, from the bare field to the airy firmament with a cywydd, a gentle prince, climbing on its backward course. I, bard of a tall slender maid, broken-hearted, keeping memories alive, and my soul raw within me, was very happy in the green grove with the joy and lofty spirits of seeing trees wearing their fresh green dress, and the shoots of vine and wheat after the sun-lit rain and the dew, and the green leaves at the end of the glen, and the thorn-brake green under its fresh white tips. By Heaven, there was also the Magpie, world's slyest bird, building in the tangled centre of the hedge a proud nest with leaves and chalky clay, and her mate was helping her.)

These introductory thirty-two lines can be properly regarded as a rhetorical ecphrasis - a separable decorative description of a stock subject. Moreover, once recognizing them as such, some of the confusion regarding their presence can be cleared away. T. Parry in his History, for instance, not knowing how to account for this extended description, explains that it is "not strictly relevant to the theme."<sup>1</sup> And while he recognizes the lines as "merely an introduction to the poem," he misappraises the relevance of their application when he suggests they are there because of Dafydd's "pure love for the spring and birds and the trees." He follows with the autobiographical fallacy when he states that "almost. . . the only time [Dafydd] is serious is when he sings of nature; serious in the sense that he is singing of something which is a true experience for him, not merely the literary usage of his age."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Parry, A History of Welsh Literature, trans. H. Idris Bell (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1955), p. 109.

<sup>2</sup>Parry, op. cit., p. 109.

In his notes to the poem in OBWV he proposes a similar interpretation, suggesting the lines appear "because Dafydd ap Gwilym enjoyed portraying natural scenes."<sup>1</sup> Not quite. The description of the fine April morning is there because it is a standard introductory topos. After poetics and rhetorics had developed a particularized treatment of the ideal landscape, it was just a step further to develop a schema for praising and describing the seasons, as we shall see in the following pages.

Stylized nature appears in elaborate garb in Mis Mai (BYU 25).<sup>2</sup> The entire poem is a description of the lovers' locus amoenus. The exotic appearance of this garden is reminiscent both of the Hesperian garden and the Christian paradisus voluptatis. God made the site for the lovers and, conventionally, the site is concealed:

Duw i mi a'm dyn diell  
A roes goed yn eurwisg well;  
(13-14)

(Trans: God gave to me and my bright girl a forest as an excellent golden dress.)

Ar Ddyfed yr addefynt  
Y bu len gël o'r blaen gynt;  
Yr awron dan yr irwydd  
Fy llys i felly y sydd.  
(21-24)

(Trans: They say that formerly there was once a concealing veil on Dyfed; now beneath the green trees my court is [concealed] like that.)

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Parry, ed., The Oxford Book of Welsh Verse (Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1962), p. 544.

<sup>2</sup>D. J. Bowen, ed. Barddoniaeth Yr Uchelwyr (Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1957). Of uncertain authorship.



This comparison taken from the native tradition (*i. e.*, the Mabinogi of Manawydan) is an obvious instance of a topos being given a local habitation and a name.

The garden is, in addition, a spiritual paradise:

baradwys ysbrydawl  
(28)

Here we come close to the medieval language of mysticism so characteristic of love as a religion, of human love foreshadowing divine love, which is prominent in a vast corpus of medieval poetry.<sup>1</sup> This earthly paradise is opulent with gold; the visual richness of the descriptive detail is typical of the manner and idiom of late rhetorical poetry. Moreover, the central image of gold dominates the entire poem, thus imparting a unity of composition not traditionally regarded as typically Welsh.

Aur a dyf ar edafedd  
Ar y llwyn er mwyn a'i medd.  
Teg yw'r pren a gwyrennig  
Y tyf yr aur tew o'i frig.  
Duw a roes, difai yw'r ail,  
Aur gawod ar y gwiall.

(33-38)

(Trans: Gold grows on the threads on the grove for the sake of him who owns it. Fair is the wood and verdant; thick gold grows from its twigs. God gave, flawless is the wattled hut [of the wood], a shower of gold on the branches.)

<sup>1</sup>One thinks immediately of Dante and Cavalcanti, of the lover's pursuit of the Rose in the Roman de la Rose, and of the paraphrases of and allusions to the Song of Songs. Dronke discusses the background of ideas in Medieval Latin and the European Love Lyric, *op. cit.*, vol. I, Chapters II - IV.

In the following passage every detail of phrase supplements and promotes the central image with descriptions of remarkable beauty. It is richly evocative, brilliantly using established images of the paradisus voluptatis (the angel, paradise, bees, the bryd bron) and vitalizing the tradition through striking metaphors.

Mae i minnau a'm meinir,  
Oes, ffair maes o saffrwm ir.  
Dal tŷ ac adeilad da  
Yr wyf o aur Arafia.  
Pebyll Naf o'r ffurfafen,  
Brethyn aur, brith yw ei nen;  
Angel mwyn yng ngwely Mai  
O baradwys a'i brodiai:  
Gwawn yn aur, gwenyn eres,  
Glöynnod Duw, gleiniau tes.  
Gwynfyd mewn gwinllan bryd bron  
Gael euro gwiaill irion,  
A brig y goedwig a gaid  
Fal yn sêr, fwliwns euraid.  
(43-56)

(Trans: Life is there for me and my maiden, a fair field of fresh saffron. I have a house and a good edifice of Arabian gold. Tent of the Lord of the firmament, cloth of gold, speckled is its ceiling; a gentle angel from paradise embroidered it in the bed of May; gold gossamer, marvellous bees, ~~butterflies~~ of God, gems of sunshine. Bliss, on the beautiful slope of the vineyard, to have fresh branches gilded, and the tops of the trees were found like stars, gold bullion.)

Such a poem justifiably finds its place in an anthology.

### Topos: The Seasons

As we have already noted, rhetoric had established a schema for praising and describing the seasons. While the bulk of seasonal poetry concentrates on spring and summer, descriptions of winter also proliferate,

either as an independent topos or combined with May (or some other vernal month) as contrastive description. Often the passing of the summer and joy is symbolically associated with the transitoriness of love, and here descriptions of winter receive frequent treatment.

The standard descriptions of the seasons have a long ancestry. They are familiar to us from Virgil, find extensive expression in Goliardic verse, appear in the European vernaculars - in French, German, Irish and Welsh.<sup>1</sup> It is in the twelfth century, however, that stylized descriptions proliferate throughout Europe with a fully realized pattern. It is, perhaps, important to recognize this verse as a separate category of nature poetry which may not have developed solely from earlier native traditions in Wales. Indeed, we lack the kind of literary analysis of Gogynfeirdd conventions which would elucidate the development of Welsh poetic descriptio. In fact, certain features of manner and idiom are already present in Gogynfeirdd verse - and there almost certainly introduced in imitation of ultimately non-native models. Gwalchmei's Gorhoffedd,<sup>2</sup> for instance, incorporates the topic, where it intrudes on native materials. In assessing this poem, both Parry and Clancy have failed to recognize the seasonal description of delights as an established

<sup>1</sup>See Kenneth H. Jackson's Studies in Early Celtic Nature Poetry (Cambridge University Press, 1935), and his Early Welsh Gnostic Poems (University of Wales Press, 1935). The introductions, notes, and appendix (to the first) are invaluable aids to the reader who requires a solid scholarly commentary on this poetry.

<sup>2</sup>In Llawysgrif Hendregadredd, pp. 16ff. Hywel ap Owain Gwynedd and Llywarch ap Llywelyn (Prydydd y Moch) also fuse nature and love in poems regarded as influenced thematically by troubadour verse. See J. Lloyd-Jones, "The Court Poets of the Welsh Princes," Proc. Br. Acad. (1948), especially pp. 188-92.

poetic convention influenced by, if not borrowed from, external sources. Parry assigns it to an undefined class of poetry which "contained, among other things, amatory verse," and classifies it as "a kind of playful miscellany."<sup>1</sup> Clancy's notes to his translation of the poem describe it as sui generis.<sup>2</sup> It is not, as we shall see, unique in its appreciation and treatment of summer. It is somewhat difficult to separate the strains of native tradition from the possible influence of an external tradition (*i. e.*, non-Celtic) with which it might easily have merged.<sup>3</sup> Certainly the thoughts of love here are generally acknowledged to be influenced by continental models.<sup>4</sup>

So familiar is the catalogue of seasonal delights - sun, clear sky, bird-song, flowers, budding trees, the green world - that it would be superfluous to detail them here. Perhaps more important than the individual correspondences is the pervasive force of the topic; and, certainly, once the details became widespread there is no longer any need to look for

<sup>1</sup>History, *op. cit.*, p. 59. Lloyd-Jones finds it equally hard to classify because of the confluence of subject-matter.

<sup>2</sup>Joseph P. Clancy, trans., The Earliest Welsh Poetry (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1970), notes, p. 207.

<sup>3</sup>One would have to distinguish here between Irish models which may have exerted some influence on Welsh nature poetry, the native llym awel tradition, and French and Latin models. Such a subject would almost certainly reward comparative study. T. Gwynn Jones' "Traddodiad Llenyddol Cymru," Y Beirniad, 1 (1911), 3-15 needs expansion and updating; Chotzen's cursory treatment was never intended to analyze the subject from this point of view. Professor Jackson's Early Celtic Nature Poetry, *op. cit.*, remains the most valuable study to date.

<sup>4</sup>The arguments for continental influence on subject-matter form a long bibliography, part of which has been cited in the preceding chapters.

direct models. Instead, a few of the more salient details will be singled out for comparison.

Understandably prominent is the depiction of Spring as progenitor. Terms of germination, increase, and awakening, therefore, mark the treatment of the season:

florum incrementum. . . .  
(from Salve ver optatum)<sup>1</sup>

Ecce, iam vernant omnia  
fructu redivivo. . . .  
tellus feta sui partus  
grande decus flores. . . .  
(from Terra iam pandit gremium)<sup>2</sup>

Lo gens tems de pascor . . . .<sup>3</sup>  
ab la frescha verdor. . . .

And, from Charles D'Orleans' Ballade to printemps graciux:

Mais vous faites tout rajeunir  
A vostre joyeuse venue.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Edited by Helen Waddell, Medieval Latin Lyrics, p. 244.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, p. 218. I give her translation: Behold, all things are springing/ With life from the dead . . ./The lovely earth hath brought to birth/ All flowers. . . .

<sup>3</sup>Bernard de Ventadour: Chansons d'Amour, ed., Moshe Lazar (Paris, 1966), p. 124. Trans: The gentle season of spring with its freshening green. . . .

<sup>4</sup>Brian Woledge, ed., The Penguin Book of French Verse (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1966), p. 272. Trans: But you make all [things] rejuvenate at your joyous coming.

Compare these lines with Dafydd's depiction of the rejuvenation of nature in Mawl i'r Haf (GDG 27),<sup>1</sup> where, apostrophizing summer, he declares:

"Thous thyself art the cauldron . . . of the world's rebirth."

Tydi yw pair . . . / dadeni byd  
(5-6)

Note, too, that he returns to this idea, enlarging upon the generative properties of nature:

Ac eli twf, ddeudwf ddadl,  
Ac ennaint coedydd gynnadl.  
(9-10)

(Trans: And salve-producing growth, doubly grown gathering, and balm of the assembly of trees.)

Concomitant with such descriptions of the fertility of spring are the related images of sprouting grains and crops. From Ovid's Fasti (IV, 127):<sup>2</sup>

nunc herbae rupta tellure cacumina tollunt

An example from Chaucer's General Prologue:

Whan that Aprill with his shoures soote  
The droghte of March hath perced to the roote. . . .

1

Eurys Rowlands has an article on Dafydd's references to Annwn in Llên Cymru V, 3 (1959), pp. 122-135, which helps elucidate this poem. See, too, his excellent study of GDG 23 (Mis Mai), in Llên Cymru, V, pp. 1ff.

2

Sir James G. Frazer, ed., Ovid's Fasti (London and New York, n. p., 1931). Trans: Now the stalks push their tips through the broken earth.

An example from Chaucer's General Prologue:

And bathed every veyne in swich licour  
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;  
Whan Zephirus eek with his sweete breeth  
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth  
The tendre croppes. . . .

(1-7)

A secular Latin lyric written by Tiberianus in the rhetorical tradition<sup>1</sup> is representative of the classical tradition:

Subter autem molle gramen flore adulto creverat

The Harley lyrics, too, incorporate this stock feature,<sup>2</sup> as does the early Sumer Is Icumen In:

Groweþ sed and bloweþ med<sup>3</sup>

Against these we can place Dafydd ap Gwilym's usage in several poems:

Cnwd da iawn, cnawd dianaf,  
O'r ddaear hen a ddaw'r haf.  
(GDG 24, 9-10)

(Trans: An excellent crop, faultless flesh, comes from old earth in summer.)

and:

Teml daearlwyth, garddlwyth gwyrrd  
(GDG 27, 20)

(Trans: Earth's heaped burden, green load of the garden.)

<sup>1</sup>Printed by Raby in his History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages, Vol. I (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1957), p. 46. Raby's seminal work provides an encyclopedic survey of the rhetorical traditions of much of the poetry and is a valuable sourcebook on this subject.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. the reference to "þe fenyl ant þe fille" in "Lenten ys come. . ." Brook, op. cit., no. 11. See, too, Jackson's Celtic Nature Poetry, p. 81.

<sup>3</sup>In C. Brown, ed., English Lyrics of the XIIIth Century (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1965), no. 6.



and, from the same poem:

Bragwair gweirgloddiau brigwydr  
(17)

(Trans: Hay-crop of the meadows, with glass-green tips).

Dafydd's brilliant use of established images, his particularization and genius for descriptive detail, gives this thoroughly conventional topic poetic vitality and distinguishes his practice from the slavish and often bookish imitations that appear elsewhere in medieval verse.

Such descriptions of summer naturally underline the season's fecundity and agreeableness by comparative references to winter's cold. From Ovid's verse on April:

densaque cedit  
frigoris asperitas, fetaque terra patet. . . .<sup>1</sup>  
(Fasti, IV, 87-88)

Parallel lines from the Carmina Burana:

Terra iam pandit gremium  
vernali lenitate,  
quod gelu triste clauserat  
brumali feritate.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>"The harshbound cold departs, the teeming earth lies open." Frazer, ed., op. cit.

<sup>2</sup>"The earth lies open-breasted in gentleness of spring, who lay so close and frozen in winter's blustering." Waddell, op. cit., text and translation. Compare, too, Salve ver optatum (Waddell, p. 244), Letabundus rediit (Waddell, p. 226), and Cedit, hyems, tua durities (Waddell, p. 223). The latter, in particular, finds echoes in Dafydd's No. 69. E. g., rigor abit; rigor et glacies brumalis et feritas. . . . Veris adest elegans acies. ("Now, Winter, yieldeth all thy dreariness, the cold is over, all thy frozenness, all frost and fog. . . . Comes now the spring with all her fair arrays.") Waddell's translation.

Compare Dafydd's:

O'r ddaear hen a ddaw'r haf.  
(GDG 24, 10)

(Trans: Out of old earth comes summer.)

Or, his reference in Mis Mai a Mis Ionawr which depicts Spring as a successful combatant against frost which she replaces with the flourishing green of April (and May):

Pan ddêl ar ôl rhyfel rhew,  
Pill doldir, y pall deildew -  
Gleision fydd . . .  
Llwybrau Mai yn lle Ebrill.  
(GDG 69, 15-18)

(Trans: When war with frost is over, and it comes like a close-leaved canopy over the meadow's hedges, the paths of May will be green in the place of April.)

In this context the metaphor of nature clothed is equally conventional. For example, the description of May from the Roman de la Rose - which also includes the comparative references to winter:

el tens enmoreus, plain de joie,  
el tens ou toute rien s'esgaie,  
que l'en ne voit buisson ne haie  
que en may parer ne se vielle  
et covrir de novele fuelle.  
Li bois recuevrent lor verdure,  
qui sunt sec tant come yver dure;  
la terre meïsmes s'orgueille  
por la rosee qui la mueille,  
et oublie la poverté  
ou ele a tot l'iver esté;

lors devient la terre si gove  
 qu'el velt avoir novele robe.<sup>1</sup>  
 (48-59)

From Charles d'Orleans Rondeau:

Le temps a laissié son manteau  
 De vent, de froidure et de pluie,  
 Et s'est vestu de broderie,  
 De soleil luyant, cler et beau. . . .

Riviere, fontaine et ruisseau  
 Portent, en livree jolie,  
 Gouttes d'argent d'orfeverie;<sup>2</sup>

From a Cambridge lyric:

Ver purpuratum exiit,  
 ornatus suos induit;<sup>3</sup>

Compare these images with those in Mis Mai (BYU 25). The conceit of embroidery:

Angel mwyn yng ngwely Mai  
 O baradwys a'i brodiai.  
 (49-50)

(Trans: A gentle angel from paradise embroidered it in the bed of May.)

<sup>1</sup>Lecoy, op. cit. (Trans: The amorous time, full of joy, the time when all things are gay, when one sees neither bush nor hedge that has not adorned itself and clothed itself in new leaf. The woods recover their verdure, which were dry while winter endured; the earth herself takes pride softened by the dew, and forgets her winter poverty; then the earth grows, exults to have a new robe).

<sup>2</sup>Woledge, op. cit., 291. (Trans: The season has discarded her mantle of wind, of cold and of rain, and dressed herself in embroidery of glittering sunshine, clear and lovely. . . .Stream, spring and brook wear pretty livery, silver drops of jewellery.)

<sup>3</sup>Waddell, op. cit., p. 168. (Trans: Spring clad in purple comes forth clothed in his adorned attire.)

The image of livery:

Pan ddŵl Mai a'i lifrai las  
Ar irddail i roi'r urddas,  
Aur a dyf ar edafedd  
Ar y llwyn. . . .  
(31-34)

(Trans: When May comes with his green livery on the fresh leaves to give dignity, gold grows on the threads on the grove.)

Compare Dafydd's image in Y Llwyn Celyn (GDG 29):

Un gadair serch, un gadoedd,  
Un lifrai a Mai ym oedd.  
(15-16)

(Trans: I had the same throne of love, the same hosts [of trees], the same livery as May.)

Or, consider a few of his many references to nature's mantle:

Dan esgyll dail mentyll Mai  
(GDG 23, 16)

(Trans: Under the wings of the leaves of the mantles of May.)

mentyll haf (GDG 24, 36; "mantles of summer")

dan gochl glas  
Y fedwen. . . .  
(GDG 141, 3-4)

(Trans: Under the green mantle of the birch.)

A similar attitude is shared by Dafydd and Charles D'Orleans in their

ascription of material value to nature.<sup>1</sup>

Anfones ym iawn fwnai,  
 Glas defyll glân mwyngyll Mai.  
 Ffloringod brig ni'm digiai,  
 Fflŵr-dy-lis gyfoeth mis Mai.  
 (GDG 23, 11-14)

(Trans: He sent me true currency, the fair green leaves of the gentle hazel-trees of May. Florins on twigs would not offend me, May's wealth of fleur-de-lis.)

A similar concept runs throughout his Yr Euryches (GDG 38) which depicts the fashioning of a birch diadem in terms of a jeweler's (goldsmith's, literally) skillful handicraft.

Thus it becomes apparent that Dafydd, whose feeling for nature has been regularly singled out as one of his most individual traits, worked within an established rhetorical framework. Though one would not want to press claims for direct sources, it is, nonetheless, important to view his use of these topoi within the special poetic milieu of his time, while simultaneously observing how such traits are made to function as part of artistic constructions.

<sup>1</sup> Rachel Bromwich in her Tradition and Innovation supplies references to Dafydd's use of iawn fwnai and to critical discussions of medieval coinage. See, in particular, D. Stephen Jones, BBCS, p. 31 on Dafydd's use of iawn fwnai, T. Jones Pierce's essay in Wales Through the Ages, I (s. l.: Christopher Davies, 1973), pp. 153-159, and Dr. Bromwich's notes on pp. 44-45 of the University of Wales publication of her Cymmrodorion paper.

Descriptio loci: Courts

Panegyric attracts a wide range of genres and subjects and allows for easy transfer of its stylistic elements from one mode to another. This, as Curtius has noted, is "a matter of great importance for an understanding of medieval literature."<sup>1</sup> The epideictic gradually found expression in other branches of literature: poetry, history, and philosophy.<sup>2</sup> It was also applied to a variety of topics, including praise of cities, countries, and courts. Such praise could either appear as a separable rhetorical ecphrasis within a larger poem or context, or it could stand on its own as the subject-matter of the literary composition. The details of the descriptio regionum (so-called by Cicero, De Orat., ll. 15, 63) or descriptio loci are familiar from the third century A.D. and comprised a description of the site (or, situation), its advantages of climate, products, and special attractions (which were, predictably, variable from culture to culture, poet to poet, and locale to locale). Its special "excellences" were also praised: its characteristics of art and architecture, its culture, the pursuits of its citizens, its socialization. During the Middle Ages ecclesiastical glories are also accorded epideictic treatment.

Welsh poetry, by its very inclination towards panegyric and through its strong patriotism, expressed its nationalistic pride in the land, its greatness and beauty, parenthetically in the *Cynfeirdd*, and increasingly

<sup>1</sup>Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, op. cit., p. 156.

<sup>2</sup>In addition to Curtius' review of the topic, see E. R. Burgess, "Epideictic Literature, "Studies in Classical Philology, III (1902), pp. 89-261, who traces the topos from its roots in classical oratory through medieval adaptations in various modes.

in the Gogynfeirdd. In the ninth-century poem Moliant Dinbych Penfro,<sup>1</sup> astutely titled by Ifor Williams<sup>2</sup> and described as "unique" by Gwyn Williams, the regional praise and description of the fortress approximates the later treatment of the topos found in medieval writers. Following the conventional invocation to God, the poem proper begins with a formulaic description of the fort which heads each englyn: "A pleasant fort stands before the plain of the sea:"

Addwyn gaer y sydd ar glawr gweilgi.

Its strategic military position is stressed by repeated references to its location; it is an "impregnable stronghold" with the sea encircling it: dinas diachor, môr o'i chylchyn. And while there is no further particularization of its features, the poet does record its social characteristics and pursuits; "poets are characteristically noisy there over mead cups."

Ys gnawd gorun beirdd uch medd lestri.

The inhabitants disport themselves pleasantly:

Addwyn gaer y sydd a'i gwna cyman,  
Meddud a molud . . . ,  
Llewyn ei cherddau yn ei Chalan  
Am arglwydd hywydd. . . .

(Trans: There is a fine fortress of revel and tumult that a multitude makes. . . . Gay were its songs at its New Year feast around a generous lord.)

<sup>1</sup>  
Oxford Book of Welsh Poetry, no. 7.

<sup>2</sup>  
For a discussion and translation of the poem, see I. Williams, Trans. Hon. Soc. Cym., 1940, pp. 66-83.



Present, too, is an abundance of gifts:

Addwyn gaer y sydd a'i cyffrwy ~~cerddau~~.

(Trans: There is a pleasant fort which is teeming with songs.)

and:

Ysgrifen Brydain bryder bryffwn  
Yn yd wna tonnau eu hamgyffrwn.

(Trans: The writings of Britain the chief concern there where waves make their roaring.)

Feasting, the lord's generosity, and the military might of its men contribute to the court's excellence. In this poem, however, we are dealing with a native form and a native topic, but it illustrates how available was the spirit of regional praise and panegyric which could later be developed with the added stimulus of outside models.

The topic appears in the Gogynfeirdd as one of a strand of several threads in such poems as Gwalchmei's Gorhoffedd (H, 16) where it is probably derived from the native tradition. In any event, much of the poem is clearly in praise of country, and its erratic treatment of the topic can be contrasted with the practice of the cywyddwyr who greatly extend and formalize the descriptio loci. Hywel ab Owain Gwynedd's Gorhoffedd (H, 315-316), like Gwalchmei's, praises the natural features of the landscape, though, again, less particularly than do the next generation of bards. In the Gogynfeirdd, the heroic is still much in evidence, though some investigation into their treatment as compared and contrasted with the Cynfeirdd and the cywyddwyr and foreign rhetorical or more courtly verse should be rewarding.

When we reach the cywyddwyr we find a much developed topos.

The praise of courts becomes a notable topic; and, as part of this praise, the elaborate description of lavish feasts and luxurious wardrobes appears as a central motif within the topic. The details receiving epideictic attention are now systematized. The physical characteristics of location and features of landscape are recorded. Depending on the poet's conception of his task, the building (or buildings) may receive detailed attention. Increased references to the cultivation of music, to pastimes and socialization, to courtly activities and the furnishings and trappings of a courtly existence, soften the military *raison d'être* of the court's (or, fort's) existence. Indeed, many of the new elements appearing in these poems are courtly, and, I believe, can be attributed to romance influences. Thus, paralleling romance practice, the cywyddwyr delight in descriptions of elaborate feasting, courtly games and diversions not the proper activity of a non-courtly or even strongly militaristic society. Greater attention is given to the presence of non-bardic minstrelsy. Moreover, much of this verse is marked by catalogues of the paraphernalia of courtly life: rich stuffs and fabrics on beds and used in clothing; exotic spices and dishes at table.

It should be emphasized that the pattern for this panegyric topos was not rigorously applied either in Wales or elsewhere in the European vernaculars. Thus, while many details correspond, they may be treated in varying order, or with varying degrees of particularization. This, however, is to be expected in the making of living poems rather than the mechanical fashioning of schoolbook exercises. What should emerge from this examination, however, is that the topic as it is found in the

cywyddwyr is not isolated from the rest of medieval poetic practice.

It is not an insular conception even though native materials may be inserted into the pattern.

We begin with the details of situation and locale. The site of Syr Hywel y Fwyall's court (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 25) is set forth in the opening lines of Iolo Goch's poem (i. e., after the initial introduction):

Cyntaf y gwelaf mewn gwir  
 Caer fawrdeg acw ar fordir,  
 A chastell gwyh gorchestawl,  
 A gwŷr ar fyrddau, a gwawl,  
 A glasfor wrth fur glwysfaen,  
 A geirw am groth tŵr gwrn graen.  
 (5-10)

(Trans: First, truly, I see a large fair fort yonder on the sea's border, and a splendid, excellent castle, with men at tables, and a rampart, and the blue sea by a fair stone wall, and waves round the swell of the dark, grim tower.)

Compare this situation with the court of Gwilym ap Gruffudd of Penrhyn described by Rhys Goch Eryri (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 310):

Rhwng Menai, a'i hertraï hi,  
 Goreuraïd, ac Yryri,  
 Y mae, myn delw, heb gelwydd,  
 Gwir Dduw, fal unlliw gwawr ddydd  
 Cylch lys dan liw calch lasar  
 Un coeth. . . .  
 Llafn ewyngant llefn wengaer.  
 (312, 17-22)

(Trans: Between Menai and its breaking waves and Snowdon, golden, by the gods, without lie, true God, as if of the same hue as the dawn of day, there is a circular court, blue white in hue; a refined one. . . . Fresh foamy smooth white fort.)

Sycharth<sup>1</sup> is similarly situated in terms of strategic military position; it is moated:

Llyna y modd a'r llun y mae  
Mewn eurgylch dwfr mewn argae.  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 36, 23-24)

(Trans: Behold the form and fashion that it has within a golden circle of water, within a rampart.)

One can compare representative romance descriptions of illustrious courts enjoying similar situations. In *Lazamon's Brut*,<sup>2</sup> for instance, the stronghold of Julius Caesar:

þe tur wes muchel and hae and þere sae heo stod wel neh.  
þe isere hire 3aef nome & Oðeres heo cleopede. . . .  
Naes naeuere na tur þe swa weore itimbred  
mid crafte swa gode swa tur of Oðeres.  
(MS. Caligula; 3872-73; 3877-78)

Tintagel is likewise situated upon the seashore, and is fast surrounded by cliffs (1586ff). In all these examples, the appreciation of the fortress for its military advantage is evident.

After the site has been established, more specific details of the features of the court are advanced. And while Iolo Goch's poem *I Syr Hywel y Fwyall* has Sir Hywel as its professed topic, more than

<sup>1</sup>Enid Roberts, "Ty Pren Glân mewn top Bryn Glas," *Cymdeithas Hanes Sir Ddinbych*, 22 (1973), pp. 12-47, supplies a nicely researched study of fourteenth-century castle building, the architecture, and the accompanying buildings within the castle compound. Her essay covers a range of details about the internal and external features of the castles, halls, parklands, and chapels of such estates. She notes that although Sycharth was not a military structure it has a moat around it.

<sup>2</sup>G. L. Brook and R. F. Leslie, eds., *Lazamon: Brut*. Vol. I, *EETS* (Oxford University Press, 1963).

half of the poem is given over to a description of the court, including its inhabitants and their various courtly activities, the men at games, the women embroidering by the window. The antiquity and excellence of the construction of the fort are noted, such factors typically included in the topos:<sup>1</sup>

A'r gaer eglur ar greigloffft  
 A'r garreg rudd ar gwr grofft;  
 Hon yw Cruciaith a'i gwaith gwiw -  
 Hen adail honno ydiw.  
 (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 26, 5-8)

(Trans: And the bright fort on the craggy height, and the red rock at the corner of the field; this is Criccieth and its worthy form - ancient is that structure.)

While this, standing independently, may be taken as more or less routine, the details of the heraldic standard on the tower and the description of the courtly activities of its inhabitants reveal a movement from a heroic to a courtly frame-of-reference. Twice Iolo Goch returns to the standard, and twice to the courtly activities:

Rhianedd, nid rhai anoyw,  
 Yn gwau y sidan glân gloyw;  
 Gwŷr beilch yn chwarae, gaer barth,  
 Tawlbwrdd a secr uwch talbarth. . . .  
 Ac ystondardd hardd hirddu  
 Yn nhâl tŵr, da filwr fu,  
 A thri blodeuyn gwyn gwiw,  
 O'r unllun, dail arianlliw,  
 (25, 13-16; 21-24)

<sup>1</sup>See Burgess, "Epideictic Literature," pp. 89-201.

pure bright

(Trans: Maidens, none inelegant, weaving silk; proud men playing - on the floor of the fort - backgammon and checkers on the dais. . . . And a beautiful long black standard on the brow of the tower, a good warrior he was, with three fine white flowers all of the same shape, leaves of silver color.)

Equally reminiscent of a romance context:

A'i llawforynion ton teg -  
 Ydd oeddynt hwy bob ddeuddeg  
 Yn gwau sidan glân gloywliw  
 Wrth haul belydr drwy'r gwydr gwiw.  
 Tau olwg, ti a welud  
 Ystondardd - ys hardd o sud -  
 Pensel Syr Hywel yw hwn;  
 Myn Beuno, mae'n ei bennwn  
 Tri fflŵr-de-lis, orris erw,  
 Yn y sabl, nid ansyberw.  
 (26, 13-22)

(Trans: And her handmaidens fair of skin - they, all twelve of them, were weaving brightly colored pure silk in the sunbeams through the fine window glass. It is for you to look; you would see a standard - it is beautiful in form - the pennoncel of Sir Hywel this is; by Beuno, in his banner there are three fleur-de-lys below the field on sable; it is not unseemly.)

Compare this scene with that of Owein:<sup>1</sup>

A Gwenhwyuar a'e llawuorynyon yn gwniaw wrth ffenestyr.  
 (3-4)

(Trans: And Gwenhwyfar and her handmaidens sewing by the window.)

<sup>1</sup>R. L. Thomson, ed., Owein (Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1968).

or:

Ac yno yd oed pedeir morwyn ar ugeint yn gwniaw pali wrth fenestyr.  
(58-59)

(Trans: And there, there were twenty-four maidens sewing brocade silk by the window.)

The romancer of Owein also comments on the fairness and beauty of the maidens (246-247). In this, as in other areas, the practice of the cywyddwyr is not unlike that of the romancer.

Rhys Goch Eryri's Llys Gwilym (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 310), meant entirely as a panegyric of a court, or a descriptio loci, exploits the courtly apparatus. The hyperbole and the eulogistic comparison with God's court in heaven are typical,<sup>1</sup> though Rhys Goch well understands the immoderate nature of that comparison as he states: "To compare the court of God above - that is a bold claim!"

. . . cyffelybu  
Llys Duw fry (llyna hy hawl!)  
(313, 12-13)

Elsewhere in the poem he compares it "to heaven on earth":

a nef ar dir  
(311, 4)

The court of Gwilym is also accorded a series of eulogistic epithets which are fairly ordinary delineations of the greatness of the court and its excellence. It is "of the same color as the swan" (unlliw ag

<sup>1</sup> Compare the Gawain-poet's appraisal of Arthur's knights as "the highest under God himself," and Dafydd Bach's description in Croeso Mewn Llys (OBWV, no. 37) of the court as a "high, fair heaven": yn llwyr degwch nef.



alarch; 310, 18), and its hue can be compared with Bercilak's castle in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight with its chalkwhite chimneys (chalkwhyte chymnees), its generally white appearance, so that it seems "pared out of paper" (pared out of papure purely hit seemed).

Increased amplification is given to the details of Sycharth. Iolo Goch's poem, in fact, follows a logical and classical organization considered by the rhetorical manuals a "natural" pattern (see Geoffrey of Vinsauf's Poetria Nova in Faral's text). It moves from the description of the exterior complex - moat, bridge, portal - to a description of the main building, the court itself, and then to a consideration of the accessory buildings and lands within the court's domain. The most inclusive of all the Welsh poems praising courts, Sycharth is heavily ornamented with rhetoric and is a striking example in Welsh of the topos. The inventory begins with a rhetorical circuitio<sup>1</sup> which amplifies the grandeur of the court's construction. Note, also, the use of traductio<sup>2</sup> for emphasis - here in the words cyplau (27): cwplws (27): cwpledig (28): cwpl (28).

Cyplau sydd, gwaith cwplws ŷnt,  
Cwpledig bob cwpl ydynt.  
Clochdy Padrig, Ffrengig ffrwyth,  
Cloystr Wesmestr cloau ystwyth.  
Cenglynrhwym bob congl unrhyw,  
Cafell aur, cyfa oll yw.  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>. 36, 27-28; 37, 1-4)

<sup>1</sup>The rhetorical amplification of an idea by dwelling on it and repeating it in various ways as discussed in Chapter III.

<sup>2</sup>Traductio, another color, is a device used for emphasis and involves the repetition of a word in a different form or case. It can also include homonyms. Again, see Chapter III.

(Trans: There are tie-beams, they are coupled work, each couple coupled, Patrick's belfry, French fruit, the cloister of Westminster with its smooth-working locks. Each identical angle is as if bound with a girth, a golden chancel; it is all complete.)<sup>1</sup>

This emphasis on harmony and order in a poem so heavily rhetorical suggests an appreciation of classical conceptions of beauty and form.

The catalogue of excellences continues with matching attention to symmetry and form; and, it is worth noting that throughout these lines one finds some of the most precisely particularized description in Welsh poetry of the period:

Cenglynion yn y fron fry  
 Dordor megis daeardy,  
 A phob un fal llun llyngwlm  
 Sydd yn ei gilydd yn gwlm.  
 Tai nawplad fold deunawplas,  
 Tŷ pren glân mewn top bryn glas.  
 Ar bedwar piler eres  
 Mae'i lys ef i nef yn nes.  
 Ar ben pob piler pren praft,  
 Llofft ar dalgrofft adeilgraff,  
 A'r pedair llofft o hoffter  
 Yn gydgwplws lle cwsg clêr.  
 Aeth y pedair disgleirlofft,  
 Nyth lwyth teg iawn, yn wyth lofft.  
 To teils ar bob tŷ talwg,  
 A simnai ni fagai fwg.  
 Naw neuadd gyfladd gyflun,  
 A naw wardrob ar bob un.  
 Siopau glân glwys gynnwys gain,  
 Siop lawndeg fal Siêp Lundain.  
 (37, 5-24)

<sup>1</sup>Enid Roberts discusses this feature, p. 24.

(Trans: Bands on the upper part, side by side, in a vault, and each one like in form to a tight-knot is knotted to its companion. Houses nine-times plated like eighteen palaces, a fair timbered house atop a green hill. His court is on four marvellous pillars, the nearer to heaven. Atop each thick timbered pillar is a loft on the front croft of secure build, and the four delightful lofts where minstrels sleep two by two. The four splendid lofts, a nest for a very fair tribe, have become eight lofts. A tiled roof, each pedimented house, and a chimney that would not nourish smoke. Nine halls matched alike, and nine wardrobes in each one. Beautiful shops, comely, with fair contents, as full and fair as London's Cheapside.)

Though the successive merits of the court comprise a substantially large number of lines, many of them are worth quoting either in part or in full because they illustrate the attention that Iolo Goch gave to the topos.

The church, central to Christian society, is represented at Sycharth:<sup>1</sup>

Croes eglwys gylchlwys galchliw,  
Capelau a gwydrau gwiw.

(37, 25-26)

(Trans: The cross of the church with comely walls of lime-white hue, chapels and worthy glass windows.)

<sup>1</sup>This is, recognizably, a characteristic of larger, multi-building courts. Bercilak's court has a chapel, and we have already pointed out the depiction of the whiteness of the walls of that court. Enid Roberts supplies useful background information on churches, chapels and belfries in the article cited above, pp. 40-41.

There follows special praise for Sycharth's advantages of husbandry,<sup>1</sup> and, again, the sense of order prevails, the ideals of form and function equally extolled.

Pob tu'n llawn, pob tŷ'n y llys,  
 Perllan gwinllan gaer wenllys . . .  
 Y pawr ceirw mewn parc arall.  
 Parc cwning . . .  
 Erydr a meirch hydr mawr chwedl.  
 Dolydd glân gwyran a gwair,  
 Ydau mewn caeau cywair.  
 Melin deg ar ddifreg ddŵr,  
 A'i glomendy. . . .  
 Pysgodlyn . . .  
 A fo rhaid i fwrw rhwydau;  
 . . . .  
 A'i dir bwrdd a'i adar byw.  
 Peunod, crehyrod hoywryw.  
 A'i gaith a wna bob gwaith gwiw,  
 Cyfreidiau cyfair ydiw,  
 Dwyn blaenffrwyth cwrw Amwythig . . .  
 Pob llyn, bara gwyn a gwin,  
 A'i gig, a'i dân i'w gegin.

(37, 27-28; 30-34; 38, 1-4; 7-14)

(Trans: Each direction rich, each house in the court, orchard, vineyard, of the fortress with its fair court. The deer graze in another park. A park for rabbits . . . ploughs and strong stallions of great repute. Fair meadows of grass and hay, crops of corn in orderly fields. A fair mill on faultless water, and its dove-cot. . . . A fishpond . . . where nets are cast when necessary. . . . And his flat land and his lively birds, peacocks and sprightly herons. And his villeins, who do every proper work, it is the necessities of the field, bringing the first-fruits of Shrewsbury beer . . . every drink, white bread and wine, and his meat, and his fire for his kitchen.)

<sup>1</sup>Burgess discusses this feature in his article. *op. cit.*, and cites classical and medieval rhetorical authorities on the motif which is but one of the excellences of a court admitting praise.

Glyndwr's court and its excellences are carefully itemized and individually praised. One wonders if, in fact, Sycharth possessed such grandeur, or if Iolo's presentation is almost wholly rhetorical. The reference to villeins doing their proper work smacks of classically oriented notions of propriety in a perfect world.

Comparing Eustace Deschamp's much shorter Ballade<sup>1</sup> on Paris, we get some appreciation of the standard motifs this topos had developed by the fourteenth century.

C'est la cité sur toutes couronnée,  
Fontaine et puis de sens et de clergie,  
Sur le fleuve de Seine située,  
Vignes, bois a, terres et prairie.  
De tous les biens de ceste mortel vie  
A plus qu'autres cités n'ont. . . .

Mais elle est bien mieux que ville fermée,  
Et de chasteaux de grant anceserie,  
De gens d'honneur et de marchans peuplée,  
De tous ouvriers d'armes, d'orfeverie;  
De tous les ars c'est la fleur, quoi qu'on die;  
Tous ouvrages à droit font;  
Subtil engin, entendement parfont  
Verrez avoir aux habitans toudis,  
Et loyauté aux euvres qu'ils feront:  
Rien ne se peut comparer à Paris.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>In Penguin Book of French Verse to the Fifteenth Century, ed. Brian Woledge, pp. 242-243.

<sup>2</sup>Trans: She is the city crowned above all others, fountain and well of wisdom and learning, situated on the River Seine, vineyards and woods she has, ploughlands and meadows. Of all good things of this earthly life she has more than other cities. . . . But she is much better than any fortified town, and with castles of great antiquity, peopled with noblemen, merchants, with all kinds of armorers and goldsmiths' work. She is the flower of all the arts, whatever anyone may say; in all crafts [her workmen] excel; subtle skill and deep understanding you will always have from her citizens, and true value in all their works; nothing can be compared with Paris.

We have mentioned the Middle English Sir Gawain and the Green Knight in terms of its treatment of color and the presence of a church. Because it so well represents the topos in a neighboring vernacular, it might do well to cite a few of its passages here in order to compare its handling of descriptive details with those of the Welsh poets. Obviously comparison must often be directed to the "spirit" rather than the "letter," but readers will recognize the topic.

A castel þe comlokest þat euer knyȝt aȝte,  
 Pyched on a prayere, a park al aboute,  
 With a pyked palays pyned ful þik. . .  
 As hit schemered and schon þurȝ þe schyre okez;  
 (767-772)

þe walle wod in þe water wonderly depe,  
 Ande eft a ful huge heȝt hit haled vpon lofte  
 Of harde hewen ston vp to þe tablez. . .  
 And syþen garytez ful gaye gered bitwene,  
 Wyth mony luflych loupe þat louked ful clene:  
 A better barbican þat burne blusched vpon neuer,  
 And innermore he behelde þat halle ful hyȝe,  
 Towres telded bytwene, trochet ful þik,  
 Fayre fylyolez þat fyȝed. . . .  
 Chalkwhyte chymnees þer ches he innoȝe  
 Vpon bastel rouez, þat blenked ful quyte.<sup>1</sup>  
 (787-799)

The Gawain-poet lavishes the same care upon architectural description and detail as does Iolo Goch in Sycharth.

<sup>1</sup>(Trans: A castle the comliest that a knight ever owned, placed on a meadow, with a park all about, with a piked palisade, enclosed full thickly. . . it shimmered and shone through the bright oaks.)

The wall stood in the water wonderfully deep, and then it rose up on high to a full huge height: of hard-hewn stone up to the moulding. . . and then [to] watch-towers full fairly fashioned at intervals, with many lovely windows that looked full neatly: a better barbican that warrior had never looked upon. And further in he beheld that very great hall, towers set at intervals and quite thickly pinnacled, fair pinnacles that fitted, and wonderfully long. . . . Chalkwhite chimneys he saw there in plenty, upon the tower roofs, that gleamed full white.)

In the beginning of our discussion of this topos we noted that descriptions of the feast were conventionally found in poems praising courts. The feast at Arthur's court in G GK and Bercilak's feast at Hautdesert deserve attention, and will familiarize readers with the motif. First, the feast at Arthur's court. After the correct seating order has been established (itself a convention, and one found in Iolo Goch's Llys Ieuan Esgob Llanelwy), the poet turns to the delights of the feast and the hall:

þen þe first cors come with crakkyng of trumpes,  
 Wyth mony baner ful bryȝt þat þerbi hanged;  
 Nwe nakryn noyse with þe noble pipes,  
 Wylde werbles and wyȝt wakned lote. . . .  
 Dayntes dryuen þerwyth of ful dere metes, -  
 Foyoun of þe fresche, and on so fele disches  
 þat pine to fynde þe place þe peple stēwes halden  
 on clothe.

(116-125)<sup>1</sup>

The feast at Hautdesert is similarly lavish; and here the poet adds details of the host's luxurious wardrobe. Later, we can compare this to Iolo Goch's handling of similar materials in his praise of the court of Bishop Ieuan.

A cheyer byfore þe chemne, þer charcole brenned,  
 Watz grayþed for Sir Gawan grayþely with cloþez,  
 Whyssynes vpon queldepoyntes þat loynt wer boþe;  
 And þenne a mere mantyle watz on þat mon cast  
 Of a broun bleeaunt, enbrauded ful ryche

<sup>1</sup>Trans: Then the first course came with blaring trumpets, with many a bright banner hung thereupon; the noise of the new kettledrum along with the splendid pipes, shrill warblings and lively awakened noise. . . . Dainties of fully costly foods came therewith, abundance of fresh food, and in so many dishes that it was hard to find a place on the cloth in front of the people to set the silver that contained the various stews.



And fayre furred wythinne with fellez of þe best,  
 Alle of ermyn in erde, his hode of þe same.  
 (875-881)<sup>1</sup>

Turning now to the descriptions of feasts and fine courtly trappings in the Welsh poems, a number of recurring similarities emerge. In most, if not all, of these poems, the presence of music and noise as part of the background, the sense of activity and movement within the hall, the appearance of the exotic in food and dress, are stressed by the poet.

Part of the social atmosphere of such courts was, of course, music and song. In an ecclesiastical court, such as is found in Iolo Goch's Llys Ieuan Esgob Llanelwy, both secular and clerical music are represented. Indeed, as Peter Dronke has pointed out: "whenever a monastery or bishop's court . . . had any pretensions to musical culture, it admitted to a greater or lesser extent songs intended for entertainment

<sup>1</sup>(Trans: Before the fireplace, where charcoal burned, a chair with cloths, cushions upon quilted coverings that were both pleasant, was pleasantly prepared for Gawain; and then a fair mantle was set on that man, of rich brown stuff, embroidered full richly and furred fairly with skins of the best, all of ermine, actually, his hood of the same.)

And, the feast:

Seggez hym serued semly innoȝe  
 Wyth sere sewes and sete, sesounde of þe best,  
 Double-felde, as hit fallez, and fele kyn fischez,  
 Summe baken in bred, summe brad on þe gledez,  
 Summe sopen, summe in sewe sauered with spycs,  
 And ay sawes so sleȝe þat þe segge lyked.  
 (888-93)

(Trans: Lads served him seemly enough with excellent and various stews, seasoned well, double the amount, as is fitting, and various kinds of fish, some baked in bread, some grilled on the coals, some broiled, some in stew flavored with spices, and in each case so skillfully made that they pleased the man.)

and not for cult, songs performed in hall rather than in church or oratory, which were thus far less restricted in their choice of themes."<sup>1</sup> Ieuan's court is thus represented by both:

Offeren fawr hoff eirian  
A gawn, a hynny ar gân,  
Trebl, chwatrebl, awch atreg,  
A byrdwn cyson, tôn teg.  
(83, 9-12)

(Trans: A grand, sweet, splendid mass we get, and that in song; treble, quatrible, lively prolonging, with a harmonious chorus of fair tone.)

While in the hall:

Cerdd dafawd ffraeth hiraethlawn,  
Cerdd dant, gogoniant a gawn;  
Cytgerdd ddiddan lân lonydd,  
Pibau, dawns, a gawn pob dydd.  
(83, 23-26)

(Trans: Ready poetry, full of longing, instrumental music, glory we get; entertaining, beautiful, peaceful harmony of song, pipes and dance we get everyday.)

The presence of scholars is recorded in a catalogue of the court's personnel; and, in fact they head the list, preceded only by Bishop Ieuan.

Hawddamawr heddiw, amen  
I feibion lleodron llên. . . .  
(82, 3-4)

(Trans: Greetings today, amen, to the young readers of learning.)

<sup>1</sup>Peter Dronke, The Medieval Lyric (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1968), p. 27.

Appropriately, the court's personnel reflects its greatness and secular cultivation:

Ac ysgwieriaid, haid heirdd,  
 Dledogion deulu digeirdd,  
 A'i siambrlain, gain gnewyllyn, -  
 F'enaïd, o'r dynaïd yw'r dyn! -  
 A'r pen cog, darpan y cad,  
 A'r drysawr da ei drwsïad,  
 A'r pantler a'r bwtler bach -  
 F'enaïd! a fu ddyn fwynach? -  
 Pobydd, cyrfydd, trydydd tro,  
 Cattrer, poed Duw a'i catwo!  
 A'r gŵr a ran ebrangeirch. . . .  
 (82, 5-15)

(Trans: And the squires, a comely swarm, faultless gentlemen of the house troop; and his chamberlain, splendid kernel, -upon my soul, the man is one in a hundred!- And the head cook ?preparation was got [IGE<sup>2</sup> editors give for darpan: ?paratoi]; and the porter, good his attire; and the pantler and the little butler - My soul! was there a milder man? The baker, the ale-brewer, and the third, the caterer, may God keep him! And the man who parcels out the horses' oat fodder.)

Certainly the picture is one of polish and ceremony; one familiar to readers of medieval romance.

The feast, with its foreign foods - and therefore exotic in a medieval context - is central to Iolo's praise of Ieuan's court. This feature alone suggests that romanticization is taking place. Moreover, the tendency to elaborate upon the variety of foods present is rooted in the eulogistic impulse characteristic of the romance also. It was apparent in the G GK passages cited earlier, and pronounced in Rhys Goch Eryri's I Lys Gwilym ap Gruffudd o'r Penrhyn, which we shall examine in some detail later. First, Iolo Goch's treatment of the motif. Note that in

this poem Iolo is careful to indicate the ceremonial etiquette by observing that he has been correctly seated at the high table.<sup>1</sup>

Peri fy rhoddi ar radd  
Iawn a wnâi yn y neuadd,  
I eistedd fry ar osteg  
Ar y ford dâl, arfer teg.  
(83, 15-18)

(Trans: I am caused to be placed ~~according to rank in the hall - he did rightly~~ - to sit on high in public at the high table, a fine custom.)

The meal itself and the plenty of the court are stressed not only by the lines which center on them, but also by the repeated references to the kitchen (the pantry, dairy, and food; 84, 1), and the careful inclusion of the cook, pantler, baker, brewer, and caterer among the list of the court's personnel (82, 9-14) remarked on above. The meal comprises:

Grawn de Paris, rhis, rhesin  
Llysiau, medd, gwenwledd, a gwin.  
(84, 7-8)

(Trans: Grapes from Paris, rice, raisin, vegetables, mead - a fine feast - and wine.)

The ambiance is unquestionably courtly. The guests, like Gawain in the passage cited above, are afforded a comfortable fire:

Pan fynwyf, pan fo annwyd,  
Tan mawn a gawn, neu gynnud. . . .  
(84, 2-3)

(Trans: When I wish, when it is cold, we get a peat fire, or firewood.)

Comparable, too, is the element of luxury in the Bishop's personal appointments which are, like Bercilak's, available to his guests:

<sup>1</sup>Compare the careful attention the Gawain-poet gives to the seating arrangements at Arthur's feast (ll. 109-115), noting the "correct" placement of Gawain, and, too, the description of the meal at Hautdesert (ll. 889-894).

nid mor anael  
Gwardrob y rhyw esgob hael.  
(83, 27-28)

(Trans: It is not so mean, the wardrobe<sup>1</sup> of a generous bishop like this.)

The delight taken in the rich stuffs, the very desire to itemize them, suggests how very consciously "literary" this poem is, and supports arguments for literary models behind it.

Cysgu ar blu neu bliant,  
A llennau, cylchedau, cant  
Ymysg o gwrlidau mil,  
A'r porffor drud o'r pwrffil,  
A'r gra o'r gynau, a'r gob,  
A'i wisgoedd - wi o'r esgob.  
Pob defnydd, ufudd afael,  
Allwn â hwn, fy iôr hael.  
(84, 15-22)

(Trans: Sleeping on feathers or cambric, and a hundred sheets and bed-covers, among a thousand coverlets, and the costly purple of the hem, and the fur of the gowns, and the cope, and his clothes - bravo the bishop! each material, a humble grasp, I had such as this, from my generous lord.)<sup>2</sup>

Rhys Goch Eryri's I Lys Gwilym ap Gruffudd o'r Penrhyn (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 310) illustrates the topos. Similarly ornamented by rhetoric, this poem also parallels romance treatment of the topic. A twenty-line catalogue

<sup>1</sup>This, considered an understatement by the rhetoricians, is an example of litotes, as was Iolo's appraisal of the handmaidens in I Syr Hwyl y Fwyall as "not inelegant" (nid rhai anyw; 25, 13). Rhetoric appears, too, in the exclamatio: F'enaïd in lines 7 and 11 of this poem to Bishop Ieuan.

<sup>2</sup>Compare the similar description of costly materials, bed of scarlet and furs, the silk, rich sendal and cambric, and the courtly feast in Owein, 318ff and 334ff. The resemblances to the GGK passages are apparent.

reviews the honor and eminence of the court, detailing features found in GKG (also found in Owein, the French Renart and numerous other romances). Like Bishop Ieuan's court and the romances, Gwilym's court is characterized by the noise of bards and minstrels, the tumult of serving, the social diversions, the extravagant tables and princely feast; the exotic smells of myrrh and beeswax here add an especially rich detail which distinguishes this court as certainly as the lavish wardrobe does Ieuan's.

Y llys iesin frenhinawl  
 Yn llwythawg win lleithig wawl.  
 Pob bwrdd gwiw o'r oliwydd  
 Parth i'n rhaid pob porth yn rhydd;  
 Pob rhyw anrheg o gegin,  
 Pob gwaith ar fyrddau, pob gwin,  
 Pob gwir anrhydedd, pob gwawd,  
 Pob gwarae dawn, pob gwirawd,  
 Pob gwledd, pob cyfanheddrwydd,  
 Pob gyfryw gost, pob rhost rhwydd,  
 Pob llwyr hoedl, pob lliw rhadlawn,  
 Pob hwyl llys, pob bual llawn,  
 Pob gras, pawb a gâr Iesu,  
 Yn y llys yna a'i llu.  
 Och ŵr! er Mab Duw na chêl  
 Ei chwpwrdd propr a'i chapel.  
 Mygu sens yn ei magwyr,  
 Tus teg mawr chweg, myrr a chwyr,  
 A glyw dieithriaid, neu glêr,  
 O'i phaement drwy bob ffumer.  
 E'i geir balsameus a gwin  
 Yn trabludd y bwrdd tryblwin.

(3ll, 5-26)

(Trans: The radiant kingly court laden with wine, with a bright couch. Each fine table made of olive wood, a dais for our need, every door free; every kind of dish from the kitchen, every confection on the tables, every wine, every true honor, every song, every sportive dance, every drink, every feast, every diversion, every kind of costliness, every ready roast, every perfect life, every gracious color, every courtly fervor, every full drinking horn, every grace, everyone who loves Jesus, in the court there among its company. Oh, man! for the sake of the Son of God, do not omit to mention its seemly cupboard and its chapel. Incense smoking by its wall; incense fair and very sweet; myrrh and wax which strangers or minstrels smell, from its pavement through every chimney. One gets balsam and wine, threefold wine causing turmoil at the table.)

The impressiveness here is at least partially achieved through the lengthy anaphoric series introduced by pob, and reinforced by the poet's exclamatio - Och wr!- in line 19.

The attention given to the dignity of the citizens' pursuits is less typical of romance practice, but common to the epideictic praise of cities and countries.

Ac urddas pob rhyw gerddawr.  
(312, 16)

(Trans: And dignity for each kind of craftsman.)

Compare this with Deschamps' Ballade above, and to its special advancement in learning:

Llundain yn ddysg  
(312, 33)

(Trans: A London in learning.)

But it is the descriptio of the romance that prevails in these poems, the romance, too, having borrowed freely from epideictic topics. It is, therefore, difficult to determine whether the poets were influenced by romance directly in their treatment of this topos, or whether they knew the topos from other sources and poetic genres.

There are two other shorter poems in Welsh which share some of the motifs outlined above and which we might comment on briefly here.

Dafydd Bach's Croeso mewn Llys (OBW, no. 37) is well within the tradition of the epideictic topic. The seasonal festivity which occasions music and joyous diversion is reminiscent of Arthur's feast in G GK (ll. 37-49; 64-71). And here, as in Rhys Goch's poem, the details are brought forward in an anaphoric series:

Yn llwyr degwch nef, yn llawr Bachelldref,  
 Y lle y bydd dolef bob Nadolig;  
 A llu o geraint, a llyn tra meddwaint,  
 A llewychu braint bro hil Meurig;  
 A llawer cerddawr, a llawen grythawr,  
 A llawenydd mawr uwch llawr llithrig;  
 A llef gan dannau, a llif gwirodau,  
 A llafar gerddau gorddyfnedig. . . .  
 A thro cerddorion, a thrydar meibion,  
 A thrabludd gweision gosymddeithig;  
 A thrulliad trablin, a thrallawd cegin,  
 A thrilliw ar win i wan blysig.  
 (p. 49, ll. 5-18)

(Trans: In the perfect beauty of heaven, on the floor of Bachelldreff, where there is uproar every Christmas; and a host of kinsmen and very intoxicating drink, and the honor of the land of Meurig's race shines forth; and many minstrels and merry harpers, and great joy on the slippery floor; and a cry with the harpstrings and deluge of drinks, and eloquent familiar songs and the coming and going of musicians, and children chattering, and the tumult of the serving lads; and the over-worked [lit., "tired"] cup-bearer, and the trouble in the kitchen, and three colors of wine, wild and good-tasting.)

Finally, among this group of poems we may consider the topic as it is found inserted in Llywelyn Goch ap Meurig Hen's Cywydd i'r Eira (DGG, no. LXXXV) where it appears as a separable rhetorical ecphrasis. Cae Gwrgenau, the court of the poet's nephew, is celebrated in much the same idiom. The literacy of the court is noted too (though this may very well be the old man's personal boast or a motif drawn from the topos) in what one must take as a reference to the oral recitation of romance:

Fy swydd gyda'm harglwyddi,  
 Hyn fydd, a'u câr hen wyf i;



Darllen cyfraith, rugliaith raid,  
A Brut hen y Brutaniaid.

(43-46)

(Trans: My job, while I'm with my lords, will be this—and I am their old friend—to read law, the fluent language of necessity, and the old Brut of the Britons.)

Christmas occasions festivity here: music, both secular and religious, tumult, activity, feasting:

Awr dda y sydd ar dduw Sul,  
Clybod yn ôl Nadolig  
Dyrnodau cogau mewn cig;  
Cynnwrf milgwn, gwn nid gau  
Cedenog o'u cadwynau;  
Cydderdd crwth chwimwth a chod,  
Cydderddau pennau peunod,  
A chlych aberth a chwerthin,  
A galw gwŷr i gael gwin.

(56-64)

(Trans: There is a good time on Sunday, hearing, after Christmas, cooks chopping meat; the tumult of shaggy greyhounds from their chains; I know it is not a falsehood; a concert of the brisk fiddle and the bagpipe, concerts from the beaks of peacocks, and offertory bells and laughter, and calling men to get wine.)

Such descriptions of courts, the selection of common details for epideictic use, the tendency toward the extravagant and the frequent use of rhetorical devices - and we have not considered the host of loanwords borrowed from French, and very often through English - suggest that we have here a distinct literary topic which is a sub-division of encomiastic verse. It is a topic shared by other medieval vernaculars and ultimately derived from rhetorical sources. Moreover, the topic

appears in a fully developed form among the cywyddwyr and distinguishes the panegyric mode of these poets (in at least this particular) from earlier native encomia.

#### Topos: Vituperatio

Another identifiable poetic/literary topic that is represented in medieval Welsh is vituperatio which inverts the epideictic of praise.<sup>1</sup> Vituperation, like epideictic descriptions of beautiful men and women, of courts and cities, and the locus amoenus, often appears as rhetorical ecphrasis introduced into any poem (or prose form) according to the needs of the writer.

The ancestry of this topos can be traced back to classical rhetoric. The Ad Herennium (III, vi, 10) includes censure as a topic which reverses the panegyric. Thus, the following topics on which praise is founded by their contraries serve as the bases for censure: external circumstances (such as descent, education, wealth, power, friendships, and their contraries); physical characteristics, natural merits (such as agility, strength, beauty, health, and their opposites); qualities of character (judgment, wisdom, justice, temperance, moral virtues, and their

<sup>1</sup>There was, of course, a strong tradition of satire and invective both in early Irish and Welsh. J. E. Caerwyn Williams reviews some of the material in his "Beirdd y Tywysogion: Arolwg," Llên Cymru, 11, 1 and 2 (1970), on pp. 61-64. See, too, Chotzen, op. cit., pp. 70ff, and for a full discussion of satire and its effects in early Irish, F. N. Robinson, "Satirists and Enchanters in Early Irish Literature," Studies in the History of Religions, ed. D. G. Lyon and George F. Moore (New York, 1912), pp. 95-130. A sensitive critical approach can be found in Northrop Frye's excellent Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton University Press, 1971), pp. 223-231, 309-314.

<sup>1</sup>contraries). In his treatment of censure, Cicero considers that defamation can be justified if the defamer feels he has suffered ill-will or maltreatment from the subject he defames. In medieval practice, as we shall see, the lecherous priest and the jealous husband are the most frequent victims of vituperative treatment in the fabliaux and popular vernacular verse.

Details common to the vituperative form, however, are often found in allegorical representations of such figures as Envy, Danger, Old Age, etc. where their application is more likely to include a more comprehensive cluster of the standard traits than is found in the caricature-like sketches accorded jealous husbands and hypocritical friars.

Abusive treatment is not limited to human subjects. Animals and objects may be personified as the targets for vituperation (such as in Iolo Goch's cywydd I'r Llong, Dafydd ap Gwilym's Y Rhugl Groen, the Harley lyric on The Blacksmiths and the Harley lyric on The Man in the Moon). Further, in a form that Burgess calls the "paradoxical,"<sup>2</sup> individual human features (such as hair or baldness) may come in for contemptuous treatment (here we may include Iolo Goch's poem I'r Farf, for example), as may such prosaic subjects as flies and gnats and the like. Thus, this perversion of the epideictic draws on subjects that by their ordinariness, clumsiness, contrariness, or inelegance are not

<sup>1</sup>See Sidonius' description of Gnatho (Epistles III, 13), for instance, which can be compared to the description of Davus found later in this chapter.

<sup>2</sup>Burgess, Stud. in Class. Phil., op. cit., p. 155.

conventionally thought of as the proper domain of elevated poetry.

The most prominent elements of the style of this topos are profanity, scattered interjections, curses, and scurrilous epithets. In contrast to the formal encomium, characterization is minimal, suggestive of the caricature in its selection of salient features which are presented with graphic sharpness and economy. In these areas the poetic topos shares traits with the fabliau, itself derived from the bourgeois tradition and resting on a more "realistic" or "naturalistic" idiom and conception of literature, its purpose and its tools. Like the fabliaux, this vituperative poetry draws its subjects from the world of the peasantry or the bourgeois, clerks, priests, and scoundrels.

Coarse, abusive poems dot the medieval vernaculars: the Provencal sirventes; the cantigas de maldezir in Spain include some of the most obscene poems recorded in the Middle Ages<sup>1</sup> - for instance, the so-called "bourgeois poets" of Italy (Cecco Angiolieri, Fazio degli Uberti) who are equally characterized by their vigorous, earthy realism. In medieval Latin, the well-known Goliardic tradition exemplifies the form. In the rhetorical manuals, Geoffrey of Vinsauf and Matthew of Vendôme supply models of the form. Geoffrey discusses the use of iocosa materia in his

<sup>1</sup>To this category, no doubt, belong the bawdy poems of Madog Dwygraig (RBP, p. 87) and Dafydd y Coed (RBP, pp. 130-131) which have never been edited, apparently because of their obscenity. T. Parry-Williams (Proc. Br. Acad., p. 257) cites a few lines of Madog's verses and generally deplors the use of the poetic medium for "vilification and vulgarity" (p. 256), and refuses to translate them. Dafydd y Coed, though a master of the traditional craft, also wrote off-color verse which is at least recognized by Gwyn Williams, (An Introduction to Welsh Poetry, p. 127) as a "grosser kind of occasional verse" best described as "grotesque," but this feature Williams admits was "one of the characteristic elements of medieval art," even though frankly obscene.

Poetria Nova (Faral, p. 255), and Matthew is indefatigable in the invention of verses defaming his rival Rufus. But it is his description of Davus (Faral, pp. 125-127) which is quoted most widely as the standard poetic model of vituperatio. Some excerpts from this description will indicate the typical scurrility of the form.

Quem leporem timor esse probat, quem praeda leonem,  
Cauda caprum, vulpem furta, rapina lupum.<sup>1</sup>  
(ll. 37-38)

Aeris est Davus faex unica, digna catenis,  
Digna Jovis trifido fulmine, digna mori.<sup>2</sup>  
(ll. 45-46)

Faecis massa, pudor naturae, sarcina terrae,  
Mensarum barathrum, stercoris aegra domus.<sup>3</sup>  
(ll. 57-58)

Vergit ad incestum, Venus excitat aegra bilibres  
Frates, membra tepent cetera, cauda riget.  
Metri dactilici prior intrat syllaba, crebro  
Impulsa quatiunt moenia foeda breves.<sup>4</sup>  
(ll. 77-80)

<sup>1</sup>(Trans: Fear shows him to be a hare, but a lion when there's prey about; a goat by his phallus, a fox for his thievery, a wolf for rapacity.)

<sup>2</sup>(Trans: Davus is simply base metal, should be locked up, blasted with Jove's three-pronged thunderbolt, done to death.)

<sup>3</sup>(Trans: A clod of dregs, a shame of nature, a load of soil, a chasm which swallows up others' hospitality, a lousy shithouse.)

<sup>4</sup>(Trans: He's inclined to incest, a sick lust encourages his two-pound brothers [?balls], his other limbs are hot, his prick [lit. "tail"] erect. Then in goes the first syllable of the dactylic metre [the longum!], and the two shorts that follow rattle the foul walls with their constant battering.)

In Matthew's model one can discern the prominence of sexual and scatological abuse, the scurrility of detail, and the interjected curses which typify the genre. The ugly and grotesque are as central to this form as beauty and nobility of form and character are of the formal encomiastic poem. It becomes, however, increasingly difficult to separate the various threads of vituperatio. While abuse is at the nucleus, it may or may not include all of the vituperative elements of grotesque portraiture and sexual-scatological slur.

The stature, hair, beard, face, skin, and limbs are focuses of poetic invective. The victim is portrayed as feeble and foul rather than healthy and wholesome. Ovid's Envy (Met., II) is lean and wasted; Famine in the Roman de la Rose is tall, thin, and feeble; Chaucer's contemptuous Reeve is slender and choleric; the clerk in the French fabliau Du Prestre et des II. ribaus is a skinny ragged fellow. Dafydd ap Gwilym's shadow (GDG 141, 30) is a scarecrow, an old yard pole (38), the black brother of a man in old rags (36). One of Eiddig's creatures who guards Dafydd's sweetheart (GDG 80; Tri Phorthor Eiddig) is a diseased, odious hag (13), vile of shape with unhealthy bones (18). Danger, the head guardian of the Rose, in the Roman de la Rose is hairy and black (ll. 2920-2926); Dafydd ap Gwilym in Y Drych (GDG 105) depicts himself as a swarthy quiver, a foul sort ('mod yn gwufr arddufrych, /Natur drwg; 19-20).

A common defect is the hunched back. Deschamps describes himself:

Je deviens courbes et bossus<sup>1</sup>  
(1)

(Trans: I am growing bent and hunchbacked.)

<sup>1</sup>Ballade, in Penguin Book of French Verse to the Fifteenth Century, ed., Brian Woledge, op. cit., p. 245.

Old Age in The Parlement of Thre Ages<sup>1</sup> is ugly, courbede (bent) and encrampeschett (contorted). Dafydd's Eiddig (GDG 98) is a hunchbacked excuse for a bodyguard (Gwragennus, esgus osgordd; 15), while Dafydd himself in an ironic understatement sees his image as ugly (Ym y dywawd. . . /Y drych nad wyf wych o wedd; "the mirror told me I'm not splendid of appearance," GDG 105, 5-6). In Ei Gysgod (GDG 141) Dafydd describes his shadow as ugly (yn hyll; l. 6), a fiendish form (dwf ellyll; "fiendish growth," l. 22), and as hunchbacked (godrum; l. 23).

Hair, rather than perceived as a crowning glory, is typically meagre and lank, white, or notable for its absence. Thus, the Pardoner in the General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales has hair so thin that it hangs "as does a bunch of flax," "by ounces in thin strips" (675-679).

The miller Symkyn in the Reeve's Tale is "bald as an ape." Deschamps in the ballade cited above has hair thinning and meagre on top, while elsewhere it is white and hoary. (Je pers mes cheveux par dessus, 3; blans et chanus, 11.) Like the Pardoner, Dafydd's hair is envisaged as sparse; worthless curly hair falls from his head in handfulls (A'r ffluwch bengrech ledechwyrrh. . . o'i said a syrth; GDG 105, 11. 15-16). The hunchbacked Eiddig of GDG 98 is referred to as "the bald tradesman" (y porthmonyn moel; l. 14). In a singularly effective image, the friar of GDG 139 is called a "loose-maned friar" (rhawnllaes frawd; l. 2), "bald and grey," (foel-llwyd; l. 23), his hair "a nest of thorns"

<sup>1</sup>M. Offord, ed., EETS, no. 26 (1959).

(unwallt nyth drain; l. 6) - a metaphor that graphically parodies Christ's crown of thorns.

In Burgess' "paradoxical" style, beards receive a certain amount of deprecatory treatment. In Chaucer's vigorous satire of the aging January in the Merchant's Tale, January is portrayed making love to May:

With thikke brustles of his berd unsofte,  
Lyk to the skyn of hound fyssh, sharp as brere.  
(1824-1825)

Iolo Goch's beard (Y Farf, IGE<sup>2</sup>. 5) is similarly compared to a coarse fish, for it is "no smoother . . . than the beer-colored tail of a rough fish:"

Nid llyfnach . . .  
No chloren gwrwben garwbysg.  
(11-12)

January's whiskers are as "sharp as briars"; Iolo Goch's are equally disagreeable to a smooth-skinned girl, for they are "rough, black and sharp:"

agarw ddulem  
(5, 5)

like vegetables:

fal llysiau  
(5, 16)

or the coat of an ancient hedgehog:

Pais draenog oediog ydyw.  
(5, 23)



"most troublesome sting of holly tips:"

Blina' col blaenau celyn  
(5, 25)

"a burden on a chin like a muzzle:"

Pwn ar ên fal penwar yw  
(5, 24)

"an old sow's hair, a crop of gorse shoots:"

Blew'r henwch . . .  
Cnwd o egin eithin wyd!  
(5, 27-28)

"stiff heather:"

grug del  
(6, 1)

"frozen stubble:"

y sofl ar rew  
(6, 4)

"like the stump of a horse's mane:"

fal bôn myngen march  
(6, 7)

All these images are domestic, and a number are provincial, typical of the bourgeois style. Realistic and naturalistic, they gain their force from their immediate associations with the routine and unromantic; they graphically illustrate the downward, earthward shifting of the

poetic vision which characterized much of late thirteenth-century and fourteenth-century literature and thought.

Dafydd ap Gwilym similarly describes Eiddig's beard in rustic, prosaic terms. It is "stiff" and "scrawny," "a slovenly beard, a fennel plant, a heather bush:"

Ei sythion flew feinion farf.  
 Diddestl farf ffanugl gruglwyn.  
 (GDG 75, 56-57)

while Gruffudd Llwyd's Eiddig has a face sown with rye husks:

Hau digon o'r rhuddion rhyg  
 (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 136, 16)

and for hair he has "feathers in his pate:"

a phlu drwy'i siad  
 (136, 18)

The Miller in Chaucer's General Prologue is remembered for the wart on his nose which has a tuft of hairs "as red as the bristles of a sow's ears" (556).

A conglomerate of details appears with often gratuitous richness of detail in descriptions of the face. Any combination of facial features may be selected for abusive caricaturing. Usually, perverting the practice of formal panegyric description, those features most praised in eulogistic verse are most denigrated in vituperatio. Just as the noble face of a patron, lord or lady, was universally described as uncommonly beautiful, the visage of the subject in this topos is typically painted as thoroughly ugly. Frequently the point is pushed home with the additional remark that the very appearance of such ugliness makes children flee or people shrink

back in distaste. And, again, the similes and metaphoric details are those drawn from domestic, pedestrian life.

In the Roman de la Rose, Danger, the loathesome guardian of the cherished Rose (and thus a comparable figure to Eiddig or the three guardians in GDG 80), has a hideous face (le vis hydeus; l. 2924), marked by a wrinkled nose and eyes as red as fire (les eulz roges come feus, / Le nes fronci; ll. 2923-2924). Old Age in the same poem is characteristically ugly (laide; l. 345), with withered, foul and wrinkled cheeks:

Mout estoit ja ses vis flestiz,  
qui fu jadis soes et plains:  
or estoit toz de fronces plains.  
(351-352)

This same method of contrast between what was and what now is appears as a major structural element in Llywelyn Goch ap Meurig Hen's I'r Benglog (no. LXXXVII).<sup>1</sup>

In fact, a special category within this topos would appear to be the allegorical representation of Old Age. Just as the figure in the Roman de la Rose is ugly and withered, so is the skull in Llywelyn Goch's cywydd. This remarkable poem makes its moral point not through the direct, explicitly didactic statement typical of moral sententia, but through the vividly descriptive images drawn from the momento mori tradition and supplemented by the sheer impact of expressive detail piled upon detail. Cast conventionally into the dialogue form, the poem achieves a dramatic tension that straight narrative descriptions on the same topic lack.

The Bard accosts the skull in reproachful terms, specifying at once that it is not a subject worthy of panegyric:

<sup>1</sup>In DGG.

Y Benglog ddiwair heb unglo  
(1)

(Trans: Chaste skull without any praise.)

and paralleling the image in the Roman de la Rose, the face of the skull is withered and wrinkled; more, it is pitted - this detail emphasizing the grotesqueness that is typical of the style.

Bendoll wystyn  
(2)

(Trans: A withered stump with its end full of holes.)

wen llwydgrin  
(4)

(Trans: White, dry, and pale.)

Allegorical representations of the Deadly Sins, of other evils, and of natural disasters receive comparable treatment in medieval iconography and literature. Old Age in the Roman de la Rose is shrunken a foot from her former height, is so frail from feebleness and age that she can scarcely feed herself, her limbs are shriveled almost to nothingness (RR ll. 340-360). Like Llywelyn Goch's skull, the two pilgrims in "The Trump of Death" in Gower's Confessio Amantis<sup>1</sup> are dried images . . . "pale and faded of hue" (ll. 2042-2043). Morgan le Fay in Sir Gawain

<sup>1</sup>Russell A. Peck, ed. (New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1968).

and the Green Knight is portrayed as yellow, with rough wrinkled cheeks that hung in loose folds, enveloped in veils so that nothing could be seen of her but her brows, eyes and lips which "were sour to see and very bleared" (ll. 951-963). The disreputable characters from the Canterbury Tales receive similar portraits. The Summoner has a fire-red cherub's face that is pimpled; his eyes are narrow; his brows scaley; and his beard scanty and meagre (ll. 623-627). So vile is his appearance that it frightens children (of his visage children were aferd; l. 628). The Miller is hardly a more attractive figure with his nose marked by a wart which bears tufts of hairs as red as bristles of a sow's ears, and his nostrils which are black and wide, over a mouth that is as great as a furnace (ll. 555-559). So, too, the skull in I'r Bēnglog is a "cold spectacle, to look at you:"

Drych oerni, edrych arnad.  
(22)

Dafydd ap Gwilym lampoons his own image in similar fashion; eyes, nose, cheeks, facial details are accorded vituperative treatment in images that are sometimes grotesque and sometimes drawn from a provincial frame of reference (as found in the bourgeois style of Chaucer). In Y Drych (GDG 105) he finds his face piteous, "a bad one:"

un drwg.  
(4)

His cheek is yellow (melynu, 7), "and all one sallow bruise:"

A chlais melynlliw achlân  
(10)

His long nose is like a razor:

Odid na ellid ellyn  
O'r trwyn hir; pand truan hyn?  
(11-12)

(Trans: A razor could almost be made of the long nose; isn't this wretched?)

His eyes are "blind auger-holes:"

Yn dyllau terydr deillion  
(14)

We have seen that Dafydd's hair, like the Pardoner's, is unbecomingly sparse, while his wrinkled face (yn wynebgrych; 33) invites comparison with the fulsome figures we have just reviewed on the preceding pages.

It is worth remarking here that while this particular poem of Dafydd's falls well within the tradition of amor courtois and its conventionalized caricature of the lovelorn victim, nonetheless within this stylized genre Dafydd individualizes his description by the images he chose to apply to himself. Thus while most courtly lovers are firmly situated in a "courtly" and therefore romantic context with images appropriately poetic, at their worst somewhat languid - Dafydd substitutes harsher, jarring images. Courtly lovers are wan, but not sallow; they are sleepless and listless, they grow thin and pine softly. But Dafydd rejects such euphemistic and polite terms. There is nothing elegant about a glassy yellow cheek, a razor-like nose, eyes that are more like blind holes than teary receptacles of a heavenly vision. Elsewhere, in Ei Gysgod (GDG 141) he seeks again a provincial frame of reference as he describes his face as

"the face of a doltish palmer:"

Wyneb palmer o hurthgen  
(35)

with a neck like a jug:

wddw ystên  
(42)

This poem is remarkable for its visual artistry which is devoted to the invention of numerous abusive epithets. Reversing the terms of panegyric, Dafydd's form is neither graceful nor handsome, but "unmanly and ugly:"

anwr hyll  
(21)

He is a "bickering herdsman in motley," not a courteous gentleman of comely speech, such as are represented in the marwnadau. He's an awkward heron beating its wings and feeding on boggy reeds, not a noble eagle; he is clad in rags not splendid raiment; he is a shepherd of filthy goblins, not a princely leader of a fine war-like host:

Bugail ellyllon bawgoel,  
Bwbach ar lun mynach moel.  
Grewr yn chwarae griors,  
Gyr llawn yn pori cawn cors.  
Garan yn bwrw ei gwryd,  
Gaerau'r ŵyll, ar gwr yr ŷd.  
Wyneb palmer o hurthgen,  
Brawd du o ŵr mewn brat hen.  
Drum corff wedi'i droi mewn carth;  
Ble buost, hen bawl buarth?  
(29-38)

(Trans: Shepherd of filthy goblins, a scarecrow in the form of a bald monk. A herdsman playing griours [a kind of game], a heron grazing on boggy reeds; a crane beating its wings, strongholds of the owl at the edge of a cornfield. The face of a doltish palmer, a black friar of a man in old rags. Ridge-like body wrapped up in tow; old farm-yard post, where have you been?)

The limbs receive incidental treatment in vituperatio, but when included they, too, are grotesque or wasted. Most often, the legs are long and thin, comparable to staffs or shafts. The Reeve in the General Prologue:

Ful longe were his legges and ful lene,  
Ylyk a staf, ther was no calf ysene.  
(591-592)

The cleric in Du Prestre et des .II. ribaus is "a skinny ragged minstrel who has a long leg blacker than a cook's stove." Similar to Dafydd's picture of himself, "he is tall, lean and lanky, and ragged from end to end:"

Quar il ot une longue jambe,  
Plus noire que forniaus de chambre;  
Plas piez avoit et agalis,  
Grans estoit, haingres et alis,  
Et deschirez de chief en chief.  
(III. 65-69)

Dafydd's legs (GDG 141, 28) are, comparably, "shafts of a hag on black stilts:"

Llorpau gwrach ar dudfach du



And, we have already noted Dafydd's similarly ragged dress:

Heusor mewn secr yn cecru  
(27)

(Trans: A bickering herdsman in motley.)

and compare line 36 above: Brawd du o ŵr mewn brat hen.

Ragged clothes appear on Avarice in the Roman de la Rose:

et avec ce que ele ert meigre,  
ert ele povrement vestue.  
Cote avoit viez et derompue  
come s'el fust a chiens remese;  
povre estoit la cote et arese  
et plaine de viez palethiaus.  
Delez li pendoit ses mantiaus  
a une percheite greileite,  
et une cote de bruneite.<sup>1</sup>  
(206-214)

As noted earlier, qualities of character receive their share of abusive treatment. In attacks on character, poets often interweave descriptive epithets and details of appearance that incorporate some of the material already covered. It is, to repeat, difficult to detach individual details for separate treatment, so intertwined were they. Whereas the subjects of panegyric were praised for their moral stature, wisdom, judgment, measured speech, and the like, the subjects of vituperatio are seen as fools, sly, lecherous, impotent and generally odious.

<sup>1</sup>(Trans: Her shrunken limbs in rags were barely clothed; her seemingly dog-bitten cloak was torn, worn-out, and poor - with older fragments patched. Fast by, her mantle hung from a shaky pin.)

Their speech is noisy and irritating. They lack generosity, as is demonstrated by Hugo of Orleans' verses to various would-be patrons, one of whom he chastizes as a "merciless man" (vir pietatis inops) worthy to burn in hell with Judas. Moreover, he is an outrageous knave, a "bully" (tirannus), a "furious man" (insano), and a "barbarian" (Daciano).<sup>1</sup> In another invective, Primas describes his subject as a double-faced hypocrite who is by night unchaste.<sup>2</sup>

Pierre D'Ailly vilifies "The Tyrant"<sup>3</sup> as a glutton (le mal glouton) who has no gladness in him (n'a plaisance, ne le delite ris, jeu, chanson ne dance). He is cruel of heart, swollen with pride and anger,

<sup>1</sup>George F. Whicher, The Goliard Poets (New York: New Directions, 1949), p. 84.

<sup>2</sup>Primas' talent for realistic narrative has long been recognized by scholars, as have the rough comedy at the core of his verse, his talent for diatribe and his penchant for ribaldry. One of his contributions to Goliardic verse was the sprouting of Latin invective. Hugo of Orleans -or, Primas - was a teacher of rhetoric at Paris in the twelfth century, widely reputed by his contemporaries and successors up to the time of Boccaccio. He portrayed himself as a drinker and gambler, a victim of his own weaknesses. In some of his self-portraits, or descriptive narratives of his activities, he bears some comparison with Dafydd ap Gwilym who starkly admits his weakness for women, his non-heroic bent, and in his description of events in the tavern. Chotzen (p. 141) suggests that some of the Welsh bards were acquainted with Primas, if only by name. And he cites Dafydd's reference to Gruffudd Gryg as "Primas ac urddas y gerdd" (GDG 20, 22) - though I am not convinced that Dafydd's usage of Primas is to be taken as referring to the arch-poet of the gutter, a reputation which was well established in the Middle Ages. There is very little "dignity" of thought or idiom in Primas' verse. Ifor Williams first called attention to this reference of Dafydd's, as well as to others among the cywyddwyr, which he took to be allusions to Hugo of Orleans (Trans., 1913-14; p. 130 and Deth., p. xlix-1). Chotzen, however, exercised caution, observing that while Iolo Goch and Dafydd may have known Primas' name -which he considers remarkable enough- (while I do not) - such acquaintance cannot, he feels, be the basis for arguing knowledge of Primas' poetry. I suggest that if they knew his name, then they almost certainly knew his reputation, even if they didn't know his verse at first-hand.

<sup>3</sup>Le Tyran, Woledge, ed. and trans., Penguin Book of French Verse, p. 218.

gloomy, full of care and melancholy (Cuer a felon, enflé d'orgueil et d'ire, /Triste, pensif, plein de melancolie). Moreover, he is vigorously denounced as a bag of excrement, a stinking cemetery (sac à fiens et puant cimetiere).

Deschamps in the deprecatory portrait of himself cited previously, castigates himself as hasty of speech (Je suis tres hastif à parler; p. 246) and lacking patience (impatient); greedy, with white and hoary hair (Couvoiteus suis, blans et chanus; p. 246), miserly, irritable and suspicious when there is no need (Eschars, courrouceux; j'adevine/Ce qui n'est pas; p. 246).

Llywelyn Goch ap Meurig Hen speaking as the Bard (I'r Benglog) calls the personified Skull a "tedious wretch" (drueni maith; 163, 10) and accuses him of "mocking out of vile deceit and spite:"

. . . i'm mingamu,  
Drwy gas aml drwg o somwaith.  
(8-9)

(Trans: Mocking me out of excessive, vile, spiteful malice.)

The loutish husband in Dafydd ap Gwilym's Y Cleddyf (GDG 143) is not only a hinderance, but base of nature with a frown like a mule - again, a reduction of stature to the ignoble, barnyard level.

Gwrdd ei rwystr, gerddor ystryw,  
Tawedog enwog anwych,  
Tew ei ddrwg, mul wg, mal ych. . . .  
(10-12)

(Trans: Fierce his obstructiveness, the cunning craftsman, taciturn, notorious, base, great his mischief, with a mulish frown, like an ox.)

The jealous or dull-witted husband, as suggested earlier and as reviewed by Chotzen, was one of the stock figures of vituperative literature. Gruffudd Llwyd in Cywydd I Eiddig (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 136) hurls invective at his subject in the conventional idiom. He is "a foul, frigid [lit., cold] fellow, a fierce and hateful fool, with spotted, withered skin":

Brwnt oerwas ffyrnicas ffwl,  
Brychgroen grin. . . .  
(136, 13-14)

His face is "blue and pustulent" (ei ffas lasgrug; l. 15), and he is all in darkness (efo yn dywyll; l. 22). He is a goat (gefryn yw; l. 10) and exceedingly unpleasing and ugly of visage (E'n hagr wep anhygar iawn; l. 28).

Dafydd ap Gwilym's numerous Eiddigs are crafty and sly, odious, obtuse, and morally bankrupt. In GDG 75, Eiddig is a "despicable foe to a love poet and to the world's bards":

Yn elyn dianwylyd  
I fardd bun ac i feirdd byd.  
(11-12)

and, "a horn of deceitful lies and dull of wit":

A chorn celwydd-dwyll pwyll pwl.  
(15)

Eiddig in GDG 79 is similarly conceived. He is a wailer (ddoléf ddylyn, l. 33) and a coward (llwfr; l. 37). His is the work of a fool, and his message is falsehood:

Llafur ffôl yw llyfr ei ffug  
(36)

(Trans: A fool's task is his deceitful text.)

Added to these defects are the sins of lechery and wrath (rwyddchwant; "quick to lust," l. 29; caliwr dig: "wrathful copulator," l. 49). And he is a liar (finffug ŵr; "lying man," l. 46).

Lechery ranks high among the sins associated with the subjects of vituperative literature. Even poor old January in the Merchant's Tale is a pathetic parody of carnal desire:

He was al coltissh,<sup>1</sup> ful of ragerye.<sup>2</sup>

While the Summoner is:

as hoot . . . and lecherous as a sprawe  
(626)

The reader familiar with Chaucer, Boccaccio, and the French fabliaux should require no further examples, and we have already noted the appearance of this sin in Matthew of Vendôme's description of Davus. But we might add one more example, and this from Primas in one of his typical diatribes against the clergy:

sacerdotem inpudicum,  
corruptorem meretricum,  
matronarum et altricum.<sup>3</sup>

Licentiousness is a frequent target for invective. Among the popular epithets is the description of the subject as a goat, a conventional

<sup>1</sup>Coltish has sexual implications.

<sup>2</sup>Ragerye: passion.

<sup>3</sup>Whicher, p. 98.

symbol of lechery. Matthew's Davus is proven "a goat by his phallus" (cauda caprum 1. 37). The Pardoner, recognizable to medieval audiences as a lascivious creature,<sup>1</sup> has "a voice as small as a goat's" (688); Dafydd's Eiddig (GDG 141) is a "hunchbacked goat" (godrum gafr; 23), and Gruffudd Llwyd's is likewise a goat (gefryn yw; 10).

A large part of the invective takes the form of name-calling<sup>2</sup> which also reduces the subject's humanity to its basest level. January is "a flekked pie" (1848); the Man in the Moon in the Harley Lyrics is a "magpie in stockings."<sup>3</sup> Dafydd had his abuse to cast at the magpie also in GDG 63, though we cannot examine that here. Similar reductions occur in Dafydd's description of Eiddig in GDG 79, where Eiddig is seen as a kite (barcud; 40). And, too, we have commented on Dafydd's mocking self-descriptions, in one of which he sees himself as a crane (garan; GDG 141, 33). Friars are typically the subject of scathing description, and are frequently de-humanized, as in GDG 139 where the friar is a kite (barcutan; 10), a crow (brân; 2), and a ram (maharen; 12). All these images essentially pervert the heroic and noble metaphors of epideictic in which men are presented as eagles, lions, boars, bulls-

<sup>1</sup>See Robinson's notes to the Pardoner (p. 667) and W. W. Curry's Chaucer and the Medieval Sciences, 2nd ed. (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1960), pp. 54ff which interprets the Pardoner's physical appearance.

<sup>2</sup>Northrop Frye has some elucidating remarks on this form in Anatomy of Criticism, pp. 278ff. And, of course, such name calling bears marked resemblances to the flyting tradition.

<sup>3</sup>No. 30 in G. L. Brook's edition of The Harley Lyrics (Manchester University Press, 1964).

beasts and birds of grand stature. Dafydd's ultimate reduction of Eiddig is perhaps found in his reference to him as a "piglet" (baid banw; GDG 75, 23).

Add to these the following epithets: Eiddig (GDG 75) is a "drone" (mae bygegyr; 9), a "son of satire" (mab gogan; 9), a "jealous muzzle" (ffroen eiddig; 63).

Not unexpectedly, anti-Semitic slurs are often hurled. Primas again supplies evidence in several poems where the targets of his invective are variously called: usurious Jew, vile Levite, and oily Jew. For Dafydd ap Gwilym, Eiddig is a "rustic Jew" (Iddew gwladaidd; GDG 76, 4). In the hands of Iolo Goch the anti-Semitism extends to the dark course of the sun, here used as a measure of the dire state of the world after the loss of the sons of Tudur ap Gronwy (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 18, 21):

Hwyl ddu fal haul Iddewon

(Trans: A dark course like the sun of the Jews.)

Siôn Cent is not beyond this sort of invective as he calls his fellow bards "all Jews" (Iddeon oll; IGE<sup>2</sup>. 183, 8).

The scatological is predictably a central element in the vituperative. Matthew decries Davus: stercoris aegra domus ("a diseased shithouse:" 1. 58); Pierre D'Ailly calls his tyrant a "bag of excrement" (sac a fiens; p. 246). The fabliau tradition exploits the scatological. (See the Miller's Tale as well as the Summoner's Prologue and Tale which centers on excrement and anal comparisons - the anus of the Devil, for instance, is described as the natural home of the friars, and the denouement of the tale itself which centers on old John's fart.)

Dafydd ap Gwilym, seemingly limitless in the abuse he directs at Eiddig, labels him a "beaver's arsehole" twice in an effort to emphasize his scorn:

Gythier efo, gwthr afanc.  
(GPG 75, 31)

Gruffudd Llwyd, outraged at the state of affairs in the world, complains that:

A fu dincwd, hwd hudawl,  
Y sy bencwd, tancwd diawl.  
(IGE<sup>2</sup>.125, 17-18)

(Trans: He who was a scrotum, conjurer's hood, is become a head-hood, the devil's fire-bag.)

This is not far removed from Chaucer's vision. Compare, too, Iolo Goch's pointed attack on the friars in Y Brawd Llwyd o Gaer (IGE<sup>2</sup>.64) which combines scatological abuse, sexual slur, and a series of low and scurrilous epithets, including what must be taken as a sexual reference to an "old crooked basket:"

hen gawell gŵyr  
(65, 17)

and the more explicit deprecation of him as a "thief, crazed-penis encircled by hair":

leidr gwylltgal gwalltgylch  
(65, 19)

or:

A'i gwfl llwyd mewn gaflllodur  
Cynhaig o Seisnigwraig sur.  
(65, 21-22)



(Trans: And his grey hood in heat in his breeches, lecherous for a sour Englishwoman.)

Cwfl in l. 21 can be taken as a double entendre, the GPC noting that it is sometimes used in a figurative sense. Iolo becomes more abusive in lines 25-34 as he introduces both the scatological and the sexual in a storm of obscenities that parallels Matthew's abusive treatment of Davus:

Cwthr pla, lle cnofa llau cnwd,  
 Ci ceillgam budr cwcyllgwd,  
 Ysgrîn gwrach fraen afiach frau,  
 Ysgod hen foelgod folgau,  
 Ystum ar sofl, gofl gowen,  
 Ystlys ysgub pys heb ben,  
 Ystelff dihir, myn Seirioel,  
 Ystyried, Myhumed moel,  
 Na allai, na fynnai ferch  
 Drosi urddol o'i draserch.

(65, 25-34)

(Trans: Plaguey anus, place of a crop of gnawing lice; a dog with twisted testicles, foul, a hooded sack, the coffin of a rotten and sickly putrid hag, the shadow of an old, empty-bellied bald sack, a shape atop stubble; ~~simper's~~ load, a side like a sheaf of peas without a head (?); vile dolt, by Seirioel, considering, bald Mohammed, he could not, nor would a girl wish to pursue [this man] on account of his passion.)

Iolo viciously attacks the friar's virility, suggesting impotence. This implication, too, is levelled by Chaucer in his deft portraits of the Summoner and the Pardoner; in the Reeve's Prologue to his tale where he describes his virtually impotent state in metaphoric terms; and it appears, as we noted earlier, in the scathing portrait of the aging January. Certainly there is more than a hint of the grey brother's

impotence in:

Llwydrwth heb warthal llodrau  
(66, 16)

(Trans: Grey and wide without the additional gift of trousers.)

Iolo Goch continues his attack in I'r Brawd o Gaerlleon (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 67):

Gi brenig drewedig draed,  
Gynfas drygwas o'r drygwaed,  
Gedowrach hagr foelgrach fawr,  
Gidwm gwregysglwm grysglawr. . . .  
(67, 11-14)

(Trans: A putrid dog with stinking feet, a wicked fellow of corrupt blood; a big, bald, scabby and ugly burdock, a knave with a knotted girdle and a covering habit)

Dafydd ap Gwilym hurls sexual invective in various directions: at Eiddig, at himself, at the rattle bag. It appears too in Dafydd ap y Coed's description of the waterfall (RBP, p. 130), and in Dafydd ap Gwilym's Y Rhugl Groen (GDG 125) where Dafydd curses the rattle bag as "devil's bell, with a stake in its fork [i. e., crotch]:"

Cloch ddiawl, a phawl yn ei ffwrch  
(38)

Direct curses are equally typical of the genre. Among the milder curses is Dafydd's call for "twelve calamities" on Eiddig:

Deuddeg anhawddfyd iddaw!  
(GDG 75, 60)

and his imprecation: "May he have in his hand a load of asafoetida,

he and his household:"

Bid iddaw yn ei law lwyth  
O faw diawl, ef a'i dylwyth.  
(GDG 75, 21-22)

and, "let him go to the devil for his shouting!"

. . . am ei ddolef  
I ddiawl aed;  
(GDG 79, 31-32)

while in GDG 143 he wishes for "a misery upon his [i. e., Eiddig's] bed:"

Oerfel uwchben ei wely  
(17)

More fulminatory is his curse at his own shadow in GDG 141 - "Devil's  
dung to you!"

Yty baw diawl!  
(44)

and perhaps the oath levelled at the rattle bag - "May the untidy churl be  
struck frigid!"

Oerfel i'r carl gwasgarlun  
(GDG 125, 41)

We have considered the friars only parenthetically in these pages  
because they form the subject of a literature of their own which will  
be considered in the final chapter. It remains in these pages to examine  
vituperatio that is directed to female figures - typically, the hag -  
and to inanimate objects and natural phenomena.

A signal characteristic of several of these poems is their insistent incantatory and onomatopoeic quality which Northrop Frye calls "babble."<sup>1</sup> The drumming movement of this verse, accelerated by rhyme, assonance, and alliteration, takes precedence over semantic considerations. Thus, in this mode generally, and as in doggerel, words are chosen primarily because they rime or scan. This rhythmical dominance over sense is also a characteristic of popular poetry, though certainly "deliberate doggerel, as in Hudibras, can be a source of brilliant rhetorical satire."<sup>2</sup>

The unedited series of englynion to a hag by Madog Dwygraig (RBP, 1274, p. 87) show a common manner and idiom. Firmly within the tradition of vituperatio, these englynion consist of little more than a catalogue of invectives. The hag, in effect, is the literary reverse of the beautiful heroine of romance or love poetry, just as Eiddig and Dafydd's self-parodies are essentially mocking inversions of the chivalric and heroic. I include the whole of Madog's poem here because of its inaccessibility to readers:

Gwrach dieiryach, grach gwrych, pyrth eirin vradw,  
Gwrach achadw, gwrach hychin;  
Gwrach heuis megys megin;  
Gwrach hyuagyl vlew swagyl vlin.

Gwrach aruthur, gwrach uthur, gwrach eithin alaf.  
Gwrach arwaf, gwrach erwin;  
Gwrach egoret gyffredin,  
Gwrach garth, gwrach a tharth o'e thin.

<sup>1</sup>Anatomy of Criticism, pp. 275-278.

<sup>2</sup>Frye, p. 277.

Gwrach du, gwrach hirdu, gwrach ordin drafael,  
 Gwrach rywael, gwrach rewin,  
 Gwrach eirwt, ysgrwt ysgrin;  
 Gwrach oeraf, lawn anaf lin.

Gwrach yssyat oesswat ys ysswin anghynnwys  
 Yr ynghennos wyrdin;  
 Gwrach ysgithrawg disgethrin,  
 Gwrach ny ochel trauel trin.

Gwrach gallawdyr groenllawdyr, grauellin horawc;  
 Gwrach lechawc, gwrach lychwin;  
 Gwrach abrec yn y chegin;  
 Gwrach afylsur llywyadur llin.

Gwrach ettaeth, gwrach gaeth, gwrach gethin letpei;  
 Gwrach vlottei, gwrach vlewtin;  
 Gwrach daer, gwrach maer mehin;  
 Gwrach hagyrdlawt heb wirawt, heb win.

Gwrach fach, gwrach malach, gwrach melin odyn,  
 Gwrach robyn reib dynin;  
 Gwrach ny'm dawr uawr vurgin,  
 Gwrach vantach, gwrach groenach grin.

(Trans: Pitiless, bristly hag, gateway for infirm ?testicles, guardian hag, grunting hag, hag with a smock like bellows; hag with hair suitable for making snares. (?swagyl vlin), awful hag, terrible hag, hag whose wealth is gorse, coarsest hag, harsh hag, hag open to everyone in common, hempen hæg, hag who expels fume from her bottom. Dark hag, long and swarthy hag, hag of violence and travail, very vile hag, ruinous hag, grumbling hag, corpse of the coffin, coldest hag, full of blemish her knee. Devouring hag, ?denying her age. . . incontinent. . . (?yr ynghennos wyrdin); tusked, harsh hag; hag who does not shun the travail of battle. Hag with stalks in leather trousers, rasping, lice-y; skulking hag, dirty hag, wanton hag in her kitchen, hag of sour(?gafyl [perhaps gafl, "groin"]). ?llywyadur llin. ?ettaeth hag, slavish hag; hideous, bent hag; meal-begging hag; hag with hairy arse; importunate hag, hag of a bacon steward; ugly and poor hag without booze, without wine. Small hag, pettier hæg; hæg of a mill-kiln, hag ?robyn, who robes corpses, hag for whom I do not care as much as a big carcass. Toothless hag; rotten-skinned hag.)

Obviously the sound effects and the abuse are meant to coincide and overwhelm, while the incantatory repetition of gwrach with corresponding rimes and patterns of assonance brings us close to the movement of the charms.

And, in a sense, flyting can be construed as the literary antithesis of the spellbinding curse or the charm.<sup>1</sup>

Iolo Goch, in a less extensive and less unsavory description, personifies the windmill in I Erchi March (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 53) as a clacking, withered hag in a series of lines that form a rhetorical ecphrasis.

Rhaid yw im ochel melin  
Henllan, gwrach gronglwydwan grin,  
A'i chlap megis hwch lipa  
Is y ffordd yn ysu ffa,  
A'i chafn, gan yr aeafnos,  
A'i ffordd garegog, a'i ffos.

(p. 53, ll. 31-34; p. 54, ll. 1-2)

(Trans: It is necessary for me to avoid the mill of the old church, the withered hag like a weak round hurdle, and her clacking like a flabby sow below the path as she gobbles beans; and her trough, on a winter night, and her stony path, and her ditch.)

It is apparent that both Madog Dwygraig and Iolo Goch were drawing on the same tradition. They use a similar core of stock phrases and metaphor which were in turn the staple of the vituperative tradition.

As a final consideration under the subject of defamatory verse, we may add the vituperative description of objects, forces, or phenomena. Such poetry is traditionally classified by editors as "occasional" or "miscellaneous" verse, but some of it falls under Burgess' classification of the paradoxical with a strong overlay of deprecation, satire, or humor. This verse, in all likelihood derived from the popular, sub-literary

<sup>1</sup>Frye makes this association in Anatomy of Criticism, p. 278.

tradition, is often characterized by its vigorous rhythmical effects and onomatopoeia. The Middle English poem, The Blacksmiths, brilliantly exploits the convention.

Swarte smekyd smeþes, smateryd wyth smoke,  
dryue me to deth wyth den of here dyntes!  
Swech noys on nyghtes ne herd men neuer:  
What knaue cry & clateryng of knockes!  
Þe cammede kongons cryen after 'col, col!'  
& blowen here bellewys þat al here brayn brestes.  
'huf, puf!' seyth þat on. 'haf, paf!' þat oper.  
þei spyttyn & spraulyn & spellyn many spelles,  
þei gnauen & gnacchen, þei gronys togydere,  
and holdyn hem hote wyth here hard hamers.  
of a bole hyde ben here barm-fellys,  
here schankes ben schakeled for þe fere-flunderys;  
heuy hamerys þei han þat hard ben handled,  
stark strokes þei stryken on a stelyd stokke.  
'lus, bus! las, das!' rowtyn be rowe -  
sweche dolful a dreme þe deuyt it todryue;  
þe mayster longith a lityl & lascheth a lesse,  
twyneth hem tweyn, and towchith a treble.  
'tik, tak! hic, hac! tiket, taket! tyk, tak!  
lus, bus! lus, das!' - swych lyf þei ledyn!  
Alle cloþemerys: Cryst hem gyue sorwe,  
may no man for brenwaterys on nyght han hys rest!<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>(Trans: Swarthy, smoke-blackened smiths, besmattered with smoke, drive me to death with the din of their strokes! Such nightly noise men have never heard: What a cry of knaves and clattering of knocks! The snub-nosed changelings cry 'Coal, coal,' and blow on their bellows until their brains burst. 'Huff, puff!' that one says; 'haff, paff!' says the other. They spit and sprawl and tell many tales; they grieve and grate; they complain together and keep themselves hot with their hard hammers. Of bull's hide are their leathery-aprons, their shanks shackled with greaves against the fiery sparks; heavy hammers they have that are mightily wielded; strong strokes they strike on a steel anvil. 'luss, buss!' lass, dass,' they crash in turn. Such a doleful din, may the devil dispel it. The master lengthens [as a musical note] a little and labors a bit less, joins the two of them and touches a treble. 'tik, tak! his, hac! tiket, taket! tik, tak! luss, buss; luss, dass!' - what a life they lead! To all horse-armourers, may Christ give them sorrow; no one for water-burners [*i. e.*, blacksmiths] can get his rest at night. No. 118 in R. H. Robbins, ed. Secular Lyrics of the XIV<sup>th</sup> and XV<sup>th</sup> Centuries (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1952.)

Kongons in line 5 is a term of abuse, and the adjective cammede (thought, interestingly enough, to have come from Welsh cam) is equally derogatory. The noise that the smiths make is captured in the imitative pounding sounds that the poet copies.

Dafydd y Coed's englynion on the waterfall (Y Raeadyr; RBP, 1360, p. 130) are comparable in spirit and rhythm. Heavily alliterated, full of adjectives of contempt, the Welsh poem relies equally on assonance for an imitative quality. I print the poem as it appears in J. G. Evans' transcription of RBP, except that I have arranged it into separate englynion and lines.

Raeadyr oercri kadyr ar cr6kedeu bach,  
bychin<sup>1</sup> geinya6c wertheu:  
rugyl ffugyl ffagyl magyl m6ygy<sup>1</sup> refreu,  
regylwern y g6m uffern geu.

Keu gossostic dic dygyn gyrb6yll asgen,  
du gynnen digann6yll,  
kaeth raeadyr diwaladyrb6yll,  
clafres bres taeoges t6yll.

T6yllld6ng r6ng du-vl6ng divlas llu keusoec  
lle keiss6yt vy lleas;  
trist ch6edyl blin doet y'r dinas,  
tanfflam dr6y raeadyr G6y gas.

Cas y6 anghadyr raeadyran,  
cassaf vn h6ch tr6ch l6ch lun;  
cas drahusffrom saf6r tom tin,  
cas cas cas cas cas c6n,  
cas digar6 ym kystegyyn,  
k6ys de6gur yr kostogyon.

(Trans: Cold, rough mighty waterfall in little buckets, small pennyworths; flow, blast, blaze - snare for wanton arses; cursed swamp in the hollow glen of Hell. Diligently-scratching ?angry, grievous hollow (mention of mischief), black candleless contention, captive waterfall, not lordly-

<sup>1</sup>Read ?bychein.



minded, busy lepress, false churlish girl. False-swearing, dark and surly, disagreeable; useless ~~host~~ <sup>host</sup> ~~of~~ <sup>at</sup> ~~draff~~, where my killing was plotted; a sad tale, troublesome, let it come to the town, a fiery flame through the hateful waterfall of the Wye. Odious is the hideous waterfall; I hate the sow-like, stupid form of the lake; outrageous and fierce is the stench of dung from its bottom; hated, hated, hated, hated, hated, hated by dogs; wrathfully and harshly they grieve me, frequently ~~anxious~~ furrow for churls.)

Note that Dafydd y Coed's terms of abuse parallel the deprecatory description of the hag. Further, reducing the waterfall to the rustic, and boorish, places it firmly in the tradition of vituperative verse that we have been discussing. The onomatopoeic effects are notable in the third line:

rugyl ffugyl ffagyl magyl m6ygyI

while the poet's censure explodes in the repetition of cas and its various forms in the final series of verses.

Dafydd ap Gwilym has several cywyddau that represent the tradition. His Y Rhugl Groen (GDG 125),<sup>1</sup> Y Cloc (GDG 66), and certain elements in Morfudd a Dyddgu (GDG 79) digress from the ostensible theme of love to describe hateful interferences. While not strictly onomatopoeic, these lines have a common purpose: censure. And in the process, oaths and vituperative sentiment are in the fore. Y Rhugl Groen is an attack on the grating din that interrupts the lover's rendezvous. The similies and metaphors pointedly reduce the subject of the attack to the ignoble or low, while the cymeriad llythrennol in lines 29ff provide an insistent approximation of the clacking noise that offends

<sup>1</sup>Rachel Bromwich has recognized the invective in this poem, and observes its appearance in Y Pwll Mawn (GDG 127) though she offers no commentary. (In Dafydd ap Gwilym: Writers of Wales, University of Wales Press, 1974, p. 61).

Dafydd. They are, in addition, parallel to the Middle English verse on The Blacksmiths and Dafydd y Coed's on The Waterfall.

Dyfod a wnaeth, noethfaeth nych,  
 Dan gri, rhyw feistri fystrych,  
 Salw ferw fach sain gwtsach sail  
 O begor yn rhith bugail;  
 A chanto'r oedd, cyhoedd cas,  
 Rugl groen flin gerngrin gorngras.  
 Canodd, felengest westfach,  
 Y rhugl groen; och i'r hegl grach!

. . . . .

Cod ar ben ffon yn sonio,  
 Cloch sain o grynfaen a gro.  
 Crwth cerrig Seisnig yn sôn  
 Crynedig mewn croen eidion.  
 Cawell teirmil o chwilod,  
 Callor dygyfor, du god.  
 Ceidwades gwaun, cydoes gwellt,  
 Groenddu, feichiog o grynddellt.  
 Cas ei hacen gan heniwrch,  
 Cloch ddiawl, a phawl yn ei ffwrch;  
 Greithgrest garegddwyn grothgro,  
 Yn gareiau byclau y bo.  
 Oerfel i'r carl gwasgarlun,  
 Amen, a wylltiodd fy mun.

(lines 15-22; 29-42)

(Trans: There came, a naked sickly fosterling with a cry, an unclean trouble of sorts, a vile, feeble little sound from the bottom of a bag-like sack from an imp in shepherd's shape; who had - notorious and hateful - a tiresome rattle-bag with withered cheeks and a grating horn; the rattle-bag sounded, yellow-paunched and used to meagre feasts; oh! the scabby shank! . . . A bag making noise on the end of a stick, a sonorous bell of pebbles and gravel. A paunch of English stones resounding; quaking in the hide of a bullock, a basket of three thousand beetles, surging cauldron, a black bag; keeper of the moor, contemporary with the straw, black-skinned, pregnant with splinters. Hateful its accent to an old roebuck, a devil's bell with a stake in its crotch; scarred with scabs, carrying stones, with gravel in its belly; may it be made into straps for buckles. A curse on the churl who dispersed the scene, amen, who frightened away my girl.)

The clock (Y Cloc, GDG 66) is cursed for its mynychglap ("ceaseless chatter;" 33) which sounds like "a goblin's mill grinding away the night:"

Melin ŵyll yn malu nos  
(34)

and like a "dog's whelp gnawing a bowl:"

Cenau ci yn cnoi cawg  
(32)

In this instance, the provocation stemmed from the clock's striking which awoke the dreaming lover. Thus, it is not primarily nor exclusively the noise which receives the poet's abuse, but the clock as "first cause" of the interrupted dream.

Eiddig's raucous howl is the butt of Dafydd's abuse in Morfudd a Dyddgu (GDG 79). Here, Dafydd interjects vituperatio in a circuitio digression as he castigates Eiddig's brutish qualities - again, reducing the subject to the ignoble. Such an attack - as we have already remarked - on the subject's moral and/or natural qualities constitutes a distinctive characteristic of the convention. While the verse here is not rhythmically parallel to the poems just considered, the message is.

A'r gŵr dygn, a'r gair digall,  
Dan guraw y llaw'n y llall,  
Llef beunydd a rydd. . . .  
(27-29)

Eiddilwr, am ei ddolef  
I ddiawl aed; pam ydd ŵyl ef,  
Och, gwae ef, ddolef ddylyn,  
Hyd ar Dduw, o hud ar ddyn?  
Llwdn hirllef llydan haerllug,  
Llafur ffôl yw llyfr ei ffug.  
Llwfr a rhyfedd y gwneddyw,  
Llefain am riain fain fyw.  
Y Deau ef a'i dihun

Dan ddywedyd, barcud bun.  
 Nid dawnus, nid dianardd,  
 Nid teg gwarandaw, nid hardd,  
 Gŵr yn gweiddi, gorn gwaeddawd,  
 Ar gân fal brân am ei brawd.  
 (31-44)

(Trans: The hard husband, and the senseless speech, beating one hand against the other, he gives forth his cry every day. . . . Feeble man, let him go to the devil for his shouting; why does he wail (oh, woe to him, a persistent cry), up to God about the girl's being bewitched? A whelp whose howl is long, widely-heard, persistent - his hypocritical text is the labor of a fool. He made a coward and oddity, crying about the slender, lively girl. He awakens South Wales with his talk, a very kite to the girl. Untalented, not handsome, not pretty to listen to, not beautiful, a bawling man, a rowdy horn, singing out like a crow for his brother.)

This poetry, the range of topoi it encompasses, the clusters of medieval conventions it shares with other literatures, and the rhetorical figures embedded within a native Celtic form, help to give some idea of the variety represented in Middle Welsh. Inevitably, medieval Welsh culture came into wider and wider contact with continental and classical ideas. And, equally inevitably, some systematic attempt should be made to discriminate between the diverse traditions and the conditions under which they met and merged. Though my present task cannot include this line of inquiry, work in comparative analysis is certain to be one of the most productive areas of Welsh scholarship as Celtic Studies attracts an increasing number of enthusiasts, and as the Welsh scholars and critics working in the area publish their research.

## Chapter V

POPULAR FORMS AND OCCASIONAL VERSE:  
 PURSE POEMS, BEGGING POEMS, THE PLOUGHMAN,  
 THE ABUSES OF THE FRIARS, LOVE POETRY.

As the earlier literatures of heroic societies are marked by panegyric and heroic verse, gnomic and hortative snatches, and the religious lyrics that emerged after Christianization, the high Middle Ages (*i. e.*, the twelfth century) gave way to scholasticism, dialectic and rhetoric which dominated a substantial bulk of the period's literary efforts. The popularity of the Roman de la Rose and Boethius' Consolation of Philosophy confirm this. The appearance of romance with its highly idealized hero and heroine representing the class ideals of the age added another dimension to medieval literature that was to find expression down to our own age. It brought with it the concept of romantic love and a number of fictional stereotypes that were to dominate prose and verse. After the "high style"<sup>1</sup> of Chrétien had passed, the fabliau exercised its influence on literature with a subject-matter and a form made possible with the rise of the bourgeois. The Goliardic poets, too, extended the range of literary possibilities, popularizing profane verse. By the late thirteenth century, but particularly in the fourteenth, cultures and traditions had merged sufficiently to give this period a stamp of polytheism. From this period survives our largest early collection

<sup>1</sup>For an excellent discussion and analysis of medieval styles, see Charles Muscatine, Chaucer and the French Tradition (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), particularly Chapters I and II on the courtly and bourgeois traditions.

of occasional verse, while in the fifteenth century the base is broadening even further.

Though the popular, "sub-literary" poetry of medieval Wales has not survived, we do have some verse that can be described as "occasional," and this may reflect, in some particulars, the popular strata.<sup>1</sup> In much of this poetry there are elements that do not belong to a courtly context: poems addressed to animals (the fox, hare, etc.), to other poets (the ymrysonau), to a purse (here include begging poems which fall peripherally within the patronage system). The poems commenting on social or political ills merit a separate category: poems which reflect an awareness of existing social, political and moral conditions appear both in English and Welsh verse of the fourteenth century. The everyday world, the poet's activities in it and sensitivities to it, the abuses of the friars, the sense of one's encroaching mortality, and retraction poems all combine to yield a variety of verse. This poetry is perhaps best regarded as a testimony to the growing secular spirit, for it reflects a frame of reference that has visibly shifted to encompass the pedestrian as well as the noble. Moreover, poetry is no longer exclusively a social craft; it now appears as an individual function.

The extent to which poetry continued to reflect a social character, however, can be seen in a class of begging poems. The begging poem had a long history in the West, and is the expected product of cultural

<sup>1</sup>Mrs. Bromwich has recently argued for a strong sub-literary influence on the poetry of Dafydd ap Gwilym in "Dafydd ap Gwilym: Y Traddodiad Islenyddol," in Dafydd ap Gwilym: A Chanu Serch, ed. John Rowlands (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1975), pp. 43-57.

conditions under which the poet is dependent on patrons for support.

Juvenal and Martial complain of their patrons' stinginess. Medieval Latin poetry has left a rich testimony of both sardonic and obsequious requests for gifts, money, various kindnesses and gratuities. Walter of Chatillon, asking the Pope for a benefice, complains that other "fools make begging poems which can be likened to the lowing of hungry cattle."<sup>1</sup>

The German Archpoet characteristically turns poetry on almost any topic into a request for favor. Using panegyric to flatter the Archbishop of Cologne, he converts his theme into a personal appeal for clothing.<sup>2</sup>

Elsewhere the Archpoet subverts a lofty religious poem into a begging poem, using Christ's words, "Give to everyone who asks," as a lever for the real matter at hand.<sup>3</sup> Primas, too, uses his art for begging. On one occasion he bitterly attacks the bishop who gave him an unlined cloak,<sup>4</sup> thus illustrating how venomous his invective could be if his requests were not met handsomely. These twelfth-century Latin lyrics bear the distinguishing stamp of the Goliardic school; they are largely trenchant, literary compositions, both in their use of allusions and lively wit.

<sup>1</sup> Karl Strecker, ed. Moralisch-Satirische Gedichte Walters Chatillon (1929), no. 11.

<sup>2</sup> "Omnia tempus habent," in George E. Whicher, ed. and trans., The Goliard Poets (New York: New Directions, 1949), p. 104.

<sup>3</sup> F. J. E. Raby, Vol. II, A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages, 2nd ed. (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1957), pp. 173-176.

<sup>4</sup> Whicher, pp. 80-83.



They are rarely obsequious.<sup>1</sup>

The large number of begging poems, cywyddau of asking, that survive in Welsh from the period of the Gogynfeirdd and into the fourteenth century indicate the social aspect of Welsh poetry. Thomas Parry has outlined the standardized pattern that these cywyddau take: "to begin with, the man addressed was praised and his pedigree traced, then came the formal request for the object desired and then the dyfalu concerning it."<sup>2</sup> These cywyddau seem to derive largely from the native Welsh tradition, although they have obvious analogues with other European verse produced under a system of patronage. (Colin Muset's, "My Lord Count, Though I Strum and Sing," for example.)<sup>3</sup> In Anglo-Saxon poetry, the scop expected gifts of gold, bracelets, horses, and even land in payment for his song. For the most part, however, the tradition of the begging poem persisted longer in Welsh.

Iolo Goch wrote several poems asking for a horse,<sup>4</sup> one offering thanks for a basalard, and a number of other cywyddau that reflect the position of bard to patron.<sup>5</sup> All these poems fall well within the tradition outlined by Parry. Llywelyn Goch ap Meurig Hen has left "Cywydd

<sup>1</sup>See Colin Muset, No. 27 in Frederick Goldin, Lyrics of the Troubadours and Trouvères (New York: Anchor/Doubleday, 1973) and Rutebeuf in Angel Flores, ed., Medieval Lyrics (New York: Modern Library, 1962), pp. 140-141.

<sup>2</sup>Thomas Parry, A History of Welsh Literature, trans. H. I. Bell (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1955), p. 155.

<sup>3</sup>"Sire Cuens, j'ai viele," in Goldin, op. cit., 426-428.

<sup>4</sup>"I Ithel ap Robert I Erchi March" (IGE<sup>1</sup>. 55; IGE<sup>2</sup>. 49), "I Erchi March" (IGE<sup>1</sup>. 58; IGE<sup>2</sup>. 52), and Diolch am Gyllell Hir Neu Faslard, (IGE<sup>1</sup>. 61; IGE<sup>2</sup>. 56).

<sup>5</sup>The many panegyrics to nobles and ecclesiastics, for instance, that we have considered in the previous chapters.



I Ofyn Milgi Du" which is, on the whole, an undistinguished cywydd, totally lacking in any individual expression. It is a strictly conventional example of the tradition.

It is but an easy and natural step from begging poems to poems addressed to the purse or penny. Though there are no extant poems to the purse in Welsh poetry before the fourteenth century, the category is represented among the cywyddwyr by Llywelyn ap y Moel, Siôn Cent and Dafydd Llwyd. The purse poem has analogues in Middle English verse, while certain features can be found in the poetry of the Goliards and troubadours. Direct address, the use of epithets, and the poet's complaint about his destitute state characterize the form. Both Siôn Cent and the English poets introduce social commentary and a caustic note by cataloguing the power and privilege that wealth affords.

Among the epithets that one would predict are those describing the purse as a preserver.<sup>1</sup>

Fy ngheidwad hoff, fy mhroffwyd,  
Fy nghydymaith uniaith wyd.  
Nid gwell ceidwad, rad roddi,  
Nyth aur, dan awyr no thi.

(ll. 3-6)

(Trans: My guardian dear, my prophet, my friend of the same language you are. There is not a better preserver, giving favor, nest of gold, under the sky than you.)

Llywelyn ap y Moel, in "I'r Pwrs," addresses his purse as a "fat warm nest,"<sup>2</sup> echoing Siôn Cent's metaphor:

<sup>1</sup>No. LXXXVI in Cywyddau Iolo Goch ac Erail, revised ed. (Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1972).

<sup>2</sup>No. LXV in IGE<sup>2</sup>. 195.

tew dwymnyth  
(1. 1)

while the purse addresses the poet as its "bright partner:"

cywely cain  
(1. 23)

And here again we might compare Siôn Cent's epithet:

fy nghydymaith  
(1. 4)

Siôn Cent's purse is, in addition, his "parson" (fy mherson; 1. 1), his "golden coffer" (fy nghoffr aur; 1. 2), his lord of remedy (fy nghyffur ion; 1. 2), his "herald" (im herod wyd; p. 260 1. 29), and his "golden jewel" (a'm heurnyn; p. 260 1. 29).

Chaucer's "Complaint to his Purse" belongs to the genre of begging poems addressed to the purse, and Chaucer uses similar epithets:

Now purse, that ben to me my lyves lyght,  
And saveour, as down in this world here.<sup>1</sup>  
(11. 15-16)

Chaucer's purse is likewise his "lady dere" (1. 2), his "quene of comfort and of good companye" (1. 13), his "lyf" and his "hertes stere" (1. 12). Such hyperbolic attributions, then, typify the form as it is found both in Welsh and in English poetry of the period.

Both Chaucer's and Llywelyn ap y Moel's poems are complaints. Chaucer accuses his purse, laments its depletion, considers his purse the source of such woe that is comparable to death. He pleads with his purse to take on its former fullness, begging to see its bright yellow color again:

<sup>1</sup>F. N. Robinson, ed., The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1961).

To yow, my purse, and to noon other wight  
 Complayne I, for ye be my lady dere!  
 I am so sory, now that ye been lyght;  
 For certes, but ye make me hevy chere,  
 Me were as leef be layd upon my bere;  
 For which unto your mercy thus I crye;  
 Beth hevy ageyn, or elles mot I dye!

Now voucheth sauf this day, or yt be nyght,  
 That I of yow the blisful soun may here,  
 Or see your colour lyk the sonne bryght,  
 That of yelownesse hadde never pere. . . .

Out of this toune helpe me thurgh your myght,  
 Syn that ye wole nat be my tresorere;  
 For I am shave as nye as any frere.  
 But yet I pray unto your curteseye:  
 Beth hevy agen, or elles moot I dye!

Llywelyn ap y Moel laments the bankrupt condition of his purse, using images of disease to emphasize its destitution. The purse, in turn, replies that it is dying for want of gold, and pleads with the bard to make it full again. Like Chaucer, the purse remembers days when it was full of gold, of "yellow up to the brim."

Bardd:

"Tydi amner, tew dwymnyth,  
 Tau glefyd, a ddaw byd byth  
 Y'th welwyf, o'th glwyf, a'th glais,  
 A'th waelod, fal y'th welais?  
 Annhebyg wyd yn nhyb gŵr  
 I fold serchocaf ildiwr.  
 Crychodd, ni'th fendithiodd neb,  
 Crin iawn din, croenen d'wyneb."  
 (11. 1-8)

Pwrs:

Murniedig ny marn ydwyf,  
 Marw o ddig am aur ydd wyf.  
 Cyn no hyn, cwyn a honnaf,  
 Cof blin, bob Myhefin haf  
 Aur a gawn o'r mawrddawn mau  
 Melyn hyd yr ymylau.  
 Bellach, sothach a'm sythawdd,  
 Bu newid tost, byw nid hawdd;  
 Arwain sorod a nodwydd  
 A gaf drimis haf i'm swydd.

O mynny, cywely cain,  
 Fywyd y m, fwya' damwain,  
 Cais Goed rhag cas a godech,  
 Y Graig Lwyd, a'r Garreg Lech.  
 (11. 13-26)

(Trans: Bard: "You, purse, fat warm nest, sickness is yours - will a world ever come when I shall see you, as I saw you, free of your disease and your bruise and your dregs? You are unlike - in a man's opinion - the form of a most pleasant spender. The skin of your face has grown wrinkled; nobody, *very withered bottom*, has blessed you." Purse: "In my judgment, I'm murdered; I'm dying of grief for gold. Before this (I proclaim a complaint), a sad memory, every summer June I used to get gold from the great gift that was mine, yellow up to the brim. Since then, dross has stiffened me [*i. e., he has been stuffed full with worthless coins*], it's been a harsh change, life is not easy; bearing rubbish and a needle I get as my job the three summer months. Bright partner, if you want me to live, greatest catastrophe, make for the Wood of the Grey Rock and the Carreg Lech for hatred and skulking.")

Both Chaucer and Llywelyn ap y Moel equate penury with approaching<sup>1</sup> death. In both poems the Speaker pleads to have his life saved.

<sup>1</sup>  
 While not an address to his purse, Primas closes a lively account of his troubles in the tavern with a reference to his purse:

Queque prius grandi residebat turgida culo,  
 evacuata iacens ore tacet patulo.  
 Que fuit in cena fecunda loquax bene plena,  
 nec vox nec sonitus mansit ei penitus.

(Trans: She who before with a big rump used to sit plump, she is silent now that she is emptied, lying on the floor with a wide open mouth; she who was rich and talkative at the very abundant supper, no voice, nor sound remains inside her. In Whicher, op. cit., p. 78.)

When Chaucer refers to his purse as his "quene of comfort and of good companye" or when Siôn Cent asserts that there is no better preserver, they are recording in poetic form one of the commonplace facts which has held universal sway over man's existence. Such ascriptions of power are not, after all, surprising. Medieval writers have left us sufficient commentary on the influence of the purse and wealth in general. Siôn Cent's poem is essentially a catalogue of the purse's power. It is a provider of comforts and luxuries:

Bûm berchen meirch, bûm barchus,  
Tlysau, arfau, creiriau crys,  
Croyw emau, modrwyau mwrn,  
Cadwynau, nwysau nawswrn.  
Trwsiad rhagor, ddyn trasyw,  
I'm gwlad a'm bwriad i'm byw.  
(11. 9-14)

(Trans: I owned horses, and honor, jewels, weapons, medallions on my shirt, bright gems, a load of rings, chains, nine-fold brooches, outstanding dress, [fit for] a well-dressed man, and it was my intention to live [thus] in my land.)

Moreover, money draws people to him; it is his source of "good company," as it was Chaucer's:

Y mae'n ymgystlwn â mi  
O genedl aml digyni  
Nawfwy, i'm nwyf duloedd, dalm/  
Nog y sydd im, neges oedd.  
(p. 260, 11. 1-4)

(Trans: A numerous, well-off family, nine times more than mine is surely, claims kinship with me; a shock to my good spirits.)

And, predictably, wealth gains him respect and a fine welcome:

Caf fy nghynnwys lwys lysenw  
Gair fwyn ar osteg gwir Fenw.  
Caf fawr barch ymhob marchnad,  
Gorsedd ymhob gwledd i'm gwlad,

A hirbarch mawr i'm herbyn.  
 Fy mhws, gormersi am hyn!  
 (11. 15-20, p. 260)

(Trans: I get welcome, am pleasantly called by my name, [given] fair greeting in public as if I were a real Menw. I get great respect in every market-place, an eminent seat at every banquet in my land, great and long lasting respect is accorded me. My purse, gramercy for this!)

A regrettable consequence of wealth and a topic which must certainly have stirred Siôn Cent's zealous notions of morality was the use of wealth to pervert justice:

O delir lledrad dilys  
 I'm llaw, a'm hebrwng i'r llys;  
 O daw barn neu gwest arnaf,  
 Gwn mai 'niheuro a gaf.  
 Deugain a dwng, digon dof,  
 DriSul anudon drosof.  
 Swyddogion haelion holi.  
 I gyd y maen' gyda mi.  
 (11. 21-28, p. 260)

(Trans: If I am caught in undeniable theft, red-handed,<sup>1</sup> and led to court, I know that I'll win acquittal when trial and judgment come upon me. Forty will swear perjury, pliant enough, for me on three Sundays. The liberal interrogating officials will be together on my side.)

Finally, money wins him the love of women and fellowship in the tavern:

Cefais fawrserch gan ferched,  
 Cawswn a geisiwn o ged. . . .  
 Ni chaf fyned o'r dafarn  
 I'm byw, a hynny o'm barn,  
 Ymdynnu o'm adanedd  
 A mi, a'm hebrwng i'r medd.  
 Adwen fy mharch, arch erchwyn.  
 Fy mhws, gormersi am hyn!  
 (11. 31-32, p. 260; 3-8, p. 261)

<sup>1</sup>The adjective, red-handed, was taken from K. H. Jackson's A Celtic Miscellany (Penguin, 1971), p. 215.

(Trans: I have received great love from women; I would have got whatever favor I asked. . . . I don't have to leave the tavern during my lifetime, as long as that is my choice; they pull me by the arm and conduct me to the mead. I know my honor, protector of a petition. My purse, gramercy for this.)

Several Middle English lyrics provide a number of parallels. These anonymous poems focus on the same points. First, the corruption of justice:

þow I haue a man I-slawe  
 & forfetyd þe kynges lawe,  
 I xal fyndyn a man of lawe 2  
 Wyl takyn my peny & let me goo.

A similar sentiment is expressed in a companion poem:

In kinges court es it no bote,  
ogaines sir peni forto mote,  
so mekill es he of myght. . . .

þe domes-men he mase so blind  
þat þei may noght þe right find,  
ne þe suth to se.  
for to gif dome þam es ful lath,  
þar-with to mak sir peni wrath,  
ful dere with þam es he.<sup>3</sup>

The Middle English lyrics parallel Siôn Cent's list of material advantages.

1

One might note in passing that if there is doubt about outside influences (non-thematic as well as thematic) reaching Welsh poetry, the repetition of the refrain in Sion Cent's purse poem argues strongly in favor of such influences.

2

"Sir Penny, I," No. 57 in R. H. Robbins, ed., Secular Lyrics of the XIVth and XVth Centuries (Oxford University Press, 1952).

3

No. 58 in Robbins. Trans.: "In the king's court it is not profitable to argue against Sir Penny, he is so immensely mighty. . . . He makes the judges so blind that they can't find the right nor see the truth. It is very loathesome for them to give judgment, thereby to make Sir Penny angry; fully beloved he is to them."

worldly advancement, women's favors, and convivial drinking companions:

& if I haue pens boþe good & fyn,  
Men wyl byddyn me to þe wyn.  
(No. 57, ll. 13-14)

Sir Peny chaunges mans mode,  
and gers þam oft to doun þaire hode,  
and to rise him ogayne.  
men honrs him with grete reuerence.  
(No. 58, ll. 13-16)

(Trans: No. 58, Sir Penny changes men's mood, and causes them often to lower their hood, and to raise it again to him. Men honor him with great reverence.)

Compare, too, the following lines with Siôn Cent's account of his honorable welcome:

þat sire es set on high dese,  
and serued with mani riche mese.  
at the high burde. . . .  
  
he es noght welkumd als a gest,  
bot euermore serued with þe best,  
and made to sit ful softe!  
(No. 58, ll. 55-57, 79-81)

Likewise, the English poet records the use of money to seduce women, and comments on the sartorial ~~spl~~endor of Sir Penny:

with Peny my men wemen till,<sup>1</sup>  
be þai neuer so strange of will,  
so oft may it be sene. . . .  
lang with him will þai noght chide,  
for he may ger pam trayl syde<sup>2</sup>  
in gude skarlet and grene.  
  
Sir Peny gers in riche wede  
ful mani go & ride on stede,  
in þis werlde wide.  
(No. 58, ll. 25-27, 29-30, 88-90)

<sup>1</sup>entice

<sup>2</sup>provide; trailing gowns





Conscience's speech returns to the topic:

Heo makeþ men misdo . moni score tymes;  
 In trust of hire tresour . teoneþ ful monye.  
 Wyues and widewes . wantounesse heo techeth . . . .  
 Apoysende Popes . an peyreh holy chirche . . . .  
 Heo may as much do . in a Mooneþ ones,  
 As 3oure secre seal . in Seuen score dayes.  
 Heo is priue with þe Pope. Prouisours hit knowen;  
 Sir Simonie and hireself . asselen þe Bulles. . . .  
 (Passus III, ll. 117-143)

(Trans: She makes men do evil many score times; in trust of her treasure full many are betrayed. She teaches wantonness to wives and widows. . . . She has poisoned Popes and corrupted Holy Church. . . . She can do as much in one month as your [*i. e.*, the King's] privy seal can do in seven score of days. She is intimate with the Pope - those who buy livings in Rome know it; Sir Simony and she herself seal the Papal Bulls.)

Compare Siôn Cent's bitter conclusion to his poem:

Er f'aur y caf, gwn drafael,  
 Y byd i gyd hyfryd hael.  
 Caf Gymru oll, ni chollir,  
 A'i thai a'i chestyll a'i thir.  
 Caf gariad ym Mharadwys  
 Caf Dduw i'm holl gorff, cof ddwys,  
 Nwyf i'm henw, nef i'm henaïd,  
 Ac arch gan Babau a gaid;  
 A bodd pob rhyfel gelyn.  
 Fy mhws, gormersi am hyn!

(ll. 9-18, p. 261)

(Trans: In exchange for my gold I'll get, I know the cost, the whole world, pleasant and bounteous. I will get all Wales, none of it lost, and her houses and her castles and her land. I will have love in Paradise; I'll have God in my whole body, solemn thought, power for my name, heaven for my soul, and a Papal indulgence would be gained, and appeasing every enemy in war. My purse, gramercy for this.)

The tone of the moral reformer comes through in Siôn Cent's poem, and is dramatically forwarded by the gravity and inclusiveness of his claim. His tone is closer to Langland's than it is to Chaucer's.

Among the most corrupt members of Holy Church, if we are to take contemporary testimony, were the mendicant orders. There is scarcely a Western European country in which they escape harsh attack for their hypocrisy, rapacity and cupidity.<sup>1</sup> The power of the confessional, their power of absolution, and their seduction of women are frequent targets of satire. Criticism of the clergy appears in Latin literature of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, often taking the form of impassioned invective, though sometimes of reasoned criticism.

In the twelfth century, Primas, Walter of Chatillon, and the monks of Cluny virulently attack members of the religious community for their abuses. Arnaut Daniel and Peire Cardenal add their voices in France, as do Chaucer and Langland, and a score of anonymous poets, in England. The critics of the friars agreed on the particulars of the clergy's corruption. Iolo Goch's denunciations are described by Glanmor Williams as "among the most virulent in Welsh literature."<sup>2</sup> In fact, they are typical of the acrimony the friars provoked in all quarters. Consider,

<sup>1</sup>There is a sizeable bibliography on the subject, both primary and secondary sources. Raby, op. cit., discusses the topic and provides literary examples from Latin. Glanmor Williams in The History of the Welsh Church from Conquest to Reformation (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1962) reviews the Welsh material. Chaucer's Canterbury Tales depict the orders in a questionable light, though his tone is not as bitter as Langland's. This criticism of the curia and clergy forms "one of the most important chapters of medieval literature" (Curtius, p. 124).

<sup>2</sup>G. Williams, Welsh Church, p. 187.

for instance, Chaucer's treatment of them in The Summoner's Tale where the friar is revealed as avaricious and cruel, but groveling if gain is involved. Note, too, Chaucer's consignment of them and depiction of their dwelling place in the devil's arse. The fabliau allowed for a greater degree of vulgar defamation. And, in fact, much of the abusive poetry on the friars should more properly be regarded as invective rather than satire.

Iolo Goch's attacks on the friars are commonplace. He accuses the friar of lechery and seduction in Y Brawd Llwyd o Gaer (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 65):

Ys mawr was, bras oedd y brawd,  
O ddirnwy aml ei ddyrnawd,  
A chal yn lledrad, o chae  
A chain wiw riain warae.  
Ni bo gwell, hen gawell gŵyr,  
Y darffo i'r brawd oerffwyr  
No'i ddal, leidr gwylltgal gwalltgylch,  
O un cas mewn rhyw le'n cylch  
A'i gwfl llwyd mewn gafll llodur  
Cynhaig o Seisnigwraig sur.

(11. 13-22, p. 65)

(Trans: He is a great fellow, fat was the friar - many his fisticuffs against lasciviousness - with his stealthy penis, if he should get to play with a lovely, fine girl. May nothing better happen - the old, crooked basket - to the grim and horrible friar, than that he should be caught, the thief with crazy penis surrounded by hair, by something nasty somewhere around; and his grey hood in heat in his breeches, lecherous for a sour Englishwoman.)

Earlier in the same poem, Iolo Goch had castigated the friar in more general terms for the same things, and for hypocrisy as well:

Llwdn troednoeth a ddoeth yn ddig  
Lle'r oedd wraig llawer eiddig  
A mwyn rianedd uwch mainc,

Mwyaf a gerym, ifainc.  
 Gwaethaf brawd i bregethu  
 Ei foes wrth urddol a fu.  
 (ll. 17-22, p. 64)

(Trans: The barefooted whelp who came fiercely to where the wives of many a jealous man were, and gentle maidens on the high bench, the young ones whom I love the most.<sup>1</sup> He was the very worst friar to preach his morality to a person in orders.)

The same criticism is levelled by Middle English poets. Lines from the anonymous "The Orders of Cain" illustrate the commonplace nature of the criticism:<sup>2</sup>

Be war þat no frer ham shryfe,  
 nauther loude ne still.  
 Þof<sup>3</sup> women seme of hert ful stable  
 With faire byhest and with fable  
 Þat can make þair hertes chaungeable,  
 and þair likynges fulfill.  
 (ll. 73-80)

Corresponding examples can be found widely, in Chaucer, in the lyrics edited by Robbins, and medieval Latin verse. A few lines later in the same poem, the bitterness reaches barbarity:

<sup>1</sup>Cerym is difficult, and would appear to require emendation that the editors do not supply. In the meantime I take it to be derived from caru, and read the phrase: Mwyaf a garaf.

<sup>2</sup>R. H. Robbins, ed., No. 65, Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).

<sup>3</sup>though

Were I am a man þat hous helde,  
 If any woman with me dwelde,  
 Þer is no frer bot<sup>1</sup> he were gelde  
 shuld com within my wones.<sup>2</sup>  
 (ll. 85-88)

Wrath and gluttony are numbered among their sins. Wrath, the friar's text in Chaucer's "Summoner's Tale," is the very sin that the friar himself epitomizes. Iolo Goch adds fierceness to his catalogue of the friar's characteristics; we have seen in the Iolo Goch passage quoted above that the friar attacks yn ddig. Later, Iolo accuses the friar of llidiog eiriau ("furious words;" l. 12, p. 65) and of "bearing a heavy load of anger" (yn dwyn llawnbwn llid; l. 2, p. 66).

The friar is, in addition, "a base, harsh, zealous slanderer:"

distadl athrodwr dwystaer  
 (l. 7, p. 66)

Iolo Goch's denunciation of the friar's hypocrisy is equally pointed, as he draws attention to the discrepancy between the friar's oath of poverty and the corpulent figure who is "like a fat squire:"

fal bras iangwr  
 (l. 14, p. 66)

In "I'r Brawd O Gaerllleon" (IGE<sup>1</sup>. 76; IGE<sup>2</sup>. 67), Iolo summarily dismisses the friar as one who "eats more than a horse:"

mwy a ŷs no march  
 (l. 10, p. 69)

Greed is added to the catalogue of the friar's sins:

llwydrwth  
 (l. 16, p. 66)

<sup>1</sup>unless: castrated

<sup>2</sup>dwelling

as are vanity, pomposity, hasty judgment, drunkenness:

Chwaen hagr i leidr gorwagrwysg,  
Chwerw dafawd oedd i'r brawd brwysg,  
Gymryd arnaw, ddifraw ddig,  
Geibr nedd, er goibr un eiddig,  
Fwrn oer fraw, farnu ar frys  
Ar enaid neb o'r ynys.

(11. 1-6, p. 65)

(Trans: It's an ugly deed for the vain, pompous thief (a bitter sharp tongue the drunken friar had, a rafter of nits.), to pretend in fearless anger - load of cold dread - for payment by any jealous husband to sit in hurried judgment on the life of anyone in the island.)

Iolo Goch continues his passionate attack against the friars, noting their favoritism:

Y gofreinia gwŷr unfraint  
(1. 24, p. 68)

while he ignores his spiritual duties:

Ac nid teilwng, gollwng gwall,  
Ni ŵyr gymunaw arall,  
Na bedyddio, bodd diddim,  
Anardd oedd, ni ŵyr ef ddim  
Mwy no mwdwl, moel madarch.  
(11. 5-9, p. 69)

(Trans: And he is unworthy, letting error go free, he knows no other communion nor baptizing, worthless pleasure; ugly he was, he knows nothing more than a haycock does, the bald toadstool.)

The friar, typically, is:

Gi brenig drewedig draed,  
Gynfas drygwas o'r drygwaed,  
Gedowrach hagr foelgrach fawr,  
Gidwm gwregysglwm grysglawr.  
(11. 11-14, p. 67)

(Trans: A putrid dog with stinking feet; a coarse cloth a wicked fellow of base blood; an ugly, big, bald and scabby burdock; a wolf with a knotted girdle and a covering habit.)

Middle English poetry illustrates how little variation there was in the criticism. Robbins' section (to his anthology of historical verse) entitled "The Critics of the Friars," provides matching testimony, as do Chaucer and Langland. Comparable charges are made against their lechery, greed and hypocrisy, against the use of the confessional for extortion and blackmail. For instance:

I haue lyued now fourty 3eres,<sup>1</sup>  
 And fatter men about the neres<sup>2</sup>  
 3it sawe I neuer þen are pese frers.  
 (Robbins, No. 65, Hist. Poems, ll. 16-19)

For when þe gode man is from hame,  
 And þe frere comes to oure dame,  
 He spares nauþer for synne ne shame  
 þat he ne does his will.<sup>3</sup>  
 (Robbins, No. 65, op. cit., ll. 41-44)

þai preche all of pouert, bot þat louw þai noght,  
 For gode mete<sup>4</sup> to þair moupe þe toun is þurgh  
 soght.  
 (Robbins, No. 66, op. cit., ll. 37-38)

lat a ffreer off sum ordur  
 tecum pernoctare,  
 odur þi wyff or þi dougtour  
 hic vult violare;  
 or þi sun he weyl prefur,  
 sicut ffurtam ffortis.  
 god gyffe syche a freer peyn  
 in inferni portis!  
 þei wely assaylle boyth Iacke & gylle,<sup>5</sup>  
 licet sint predones.  
 (Robbins, No. 67, op. cit., ll. 21-30)

<sup>1</sup>years

<sup>2</sup>[neres] not kidneys; the non-historic -n is used here with the instead of a. See Robbins' note, p. 334.

<sup>3</sup>sexual desire

<sup>4</sup>food

<sup>5</sup>[sic]



The power of the confessional was a potent force exploited by the friars. Chaucer's portrait of the friar in his General Prologue represents the tradition:

A FRERE ther was, a wantowne and a merye. . . .  
 Ful wel biloved and famulier was he  
 With frankeleyns over al in his contree,  
 And eek with worthy wommen of the toun;  
 For he hadde power of confessioun. . . .  
 Ful swetely herde he confessioun,  
 And plesaunt was his absolucioun:  
 Ther as he wiste to have a good pitaunce.  
 (GP, ll. 208-224)

And, compare the following lines from a Middle English poem:

ƿai say ƿat ƿai distroye synne,  
 & ƿai mayntene men moste ƿer-inne;  
 For had a man slayn al his kynne,  
     go shryue him at a frere,  
 & for lesse ƿen a payre of shone  
 He wol assoil him, clene & sone.  
 (Robbins, op. cit., No. 65, ll. 97-102)

Dafydd ap Gwilym's denunciation is less virulent, but, like Chaucer's, his irony is detectable.<sup>1</sup> As Chaucer satirizes the "In principio" (GP, l. 254) that the friar sings "sweetly" for gain, similarly Dafydd recognizes the hypocrisy of the friar's oiled tongue and sweetly sung mass:

Periglor gerddor geirddoeth,  
 Barcutan, da y can, Duw coeth.  
 Mawr yw braint siartr ei gartref,  
 Maharen o nen y nef.  
 Huawdl o'i ben gymhennair,  
 Hoedl o'i fin, hudol i Fair.  
 (No. 139, ll. 9-14)

<sup>1</sup>H. I. Bell, writing on "Dafydd ap Gwilym," Yorkshire Celtic Studies, I (1937-38), pp. 11-32, briefly refers to Dafydd's argument with the friars, and sees it as an attack on their "Puritanism" rather than on their "vices" (p. 28).

(Trans: Mass priest, word-skilled chanter, kite, well he sings,  
pure God! Great is the privilege of the charter of his house,  
ram of the vault of heaven. Eloquent the smooth speech of his mouth,  
life from his lip, sorcerer to Mary.)

An interesting note may be added here on the charges levelled against the friars. Robbins notes that in the fourteenth century periodic accusations of treachery were lodged against the friars. He quotes one such charge from the English Chronicle for the year 1402 which accuses the friars of aiding the cause of Owen Glyndwr:

Also, ye with your fals flateryng and ypocrisie,  
haue gadrid a gret summe of money with begging  
and sent it to Oweyne of Glendore, a traitour,  
that he sholde come and destroy England.<sup>1</sup>

This aspect of Anglo-Welsh history has not received attention (to my knowledge), but may be as lost to history as the contemporary accounts of the revolt itself.

The figure of the Ploughman stands in marked contrast to the figure of the Friar. In the literature of the period the Ploughman appears as the antithesis of the Friar, symbolizing the true Christian who lives in perfect charity, virtuous in thought and deed. As we see him in Piers Ploughman, he is contrasted with the palmer and other members of secular and religious society who are essentially parasites on the ploughman's labor. Piers is, in addition, the true pilgrim who by daily actions redeems his soul. It is the ploughman who, through his work in the fields

<sup>1</sup>Robbins, Historical Poems, p. 337.

and to borrow a phrase from Chaucer's Parson, makes "thilke parfit, glorious pilgrimage,/ That highte Jerusalem celestial." His role as provider for society is regularly praised by medieval poets. And, indeed, after the famine that followed the Black Death, the ploughman supplied the moralist and poet alike with a convenient paragon. Both in Book V and in the allegory of Book VI, Langland instructs his audience to follow the ploughman's example of good works and charity in order to reach heaven. Caritas, the cornerstone of Christian doctrine, guides the ploughman.

3e mote go þourgh mekeness . bothe men and wyues,  
 Tyl 3ecome in-to conscience . þat cryst wite þe sothe,<sup>1</sup>  
 þat 3e louen owre lorde god . leuest<sup>2</sup> of alle þinges,  
 And þanne 3owre neighbors nexte . in non wise apeyre  
 Otherwyse þan þow woldest . he wrou3te<sup>3</sup> to þi-selue.  
 (Passus V, ll. 570-74)<sup>4</sup>

Chaucer's ploughman and his brother the parson are the only two pilgrims who escape Chaucer's satire. The qualities for which he praises the ploughman match the qualities praised by Langland, and, as we shall see in a moment, by Iolo Goch.

<sup>1</sup>knows

<sup>2</sup>above

<sup>3</sup>wrought

<sup>4</sup>W. W. Skeat, ed., The Vision of William concerning Piers the Plowman, B text, EETS (London, 1869).

A trewe swynkere<sup>1</sup> and a good was he,  
 Lyvyng in pees and parfit charitee,  
 God loved he best with al his hoole herte  
 At alle tymes, thogh him gamed or smerte,<sup>2</sup>  
 And thanne his neighebor right as hymselfe.  
 He wolde thresshe, and therto dyke and delve,  
 For Christes sake, for every povre wight,  
 Withouten hire, if it lay in his myght.  
 His tithes payde he ful fair and wel,  
 Bothe of his propre swynk and his catel.  
 (GP, 11. 531-40)

Iolo Goch's "Cywydd y Llafurwr" (IGE<sup>1</sup>. 88; IGE<sup>2</sup>. 79) is, according to Glanmor Williams, a poem on "the sanctity of productive labour."<sup>3</sup> Iolo's llafurwr<sup>4</sup> follows the precepts espoused by Piers; he lives in Christian piety and charity, and is extolled by Iolo Goch in terms similar to those used by Langland and Chaucer. The account of the llafurwr's conduct on earth and his certain salvation accords with the convention as it is found elsewhere.

Pan ddangoso, rhyw dro rhydd,  
 Pobl y byd peibl lu bedydd,  
 Garbron Duw, cun eiddun oedd,  
 Gwiw iaith ddrud, eu gweithredoedd,  
 Ar ben Mynydd, lle'i bydd barn,  
 I gyd, Olifer gadarn,  
 Llawen fydd chwedl diledlaes  
 Llafurwr, tramwywr maes. . . .  
 (11. 1-8)

<sup>1</sup>laborer

<sup>2</sup>favoured; afflicted

<sup>3</sup>Glanmor Williams, The Welsh Church, p. 186. Williams rejects Saunders Lewis' argument ascribing monastic motivation to the cywydd, and instead sees the poem as a praise poem written for monks who labored in the field. Williams places the cywydd within the "politico-religious background which inspired English verse such as the "Song of the Husbandman" and even Piers Plowman" (p. 186).

<sup>4</sup>husbandman

Hawdd i lafurwr hoywddol  
 Hyder ar Dduw Nêr yn ôl.  
 O gardod, drwy gywirdeb,  
 O lety, ni necy neb.  
 Ni rydd farn eithr ar arnawdd,  
 Ni châr yn ei gyfar gawdd.  
 Ni ddeily rhyfel, ni ddilyn,  
 Ni threisia am ei dda ddyn.  
 Ni bydd ry gadarn arnam,  
 Ni yrr hawl gymedrawl gam,  
 Nid addas, ond ei oddef;  
 Nid bywyd nid byd heb ef.  
 Gwn mai digrifach ganwaith  
 Gantho, modd digyffro maith,  
 Gaffel, ni'm dawr heb fawr fai,  
 Yr aradr crwm, a'r irai,  
 No phed fai, pan dorrai dŵr,  
 Yn rhith Arthur anrheithiwr.

(11. 13-30)

(Trans: When, at a certain time released, the people of the world,  
 lively host in their baptism, manifest their deeds in the presence of God  
 (a fond Lord he would be) with fit, bold language on the top of Mount  
 Olive the mighty, where they will be judged all together, happy will be  
 the succinct story of the ploughman, traverser of the field. . . . .  
 Confidence in the Lord God is easy thereupon for the ploughman of the  
 bright meadow. Through strict faith, he refuses no one charity and lodging.  
 He passes judgment on nothing but the plough-beam; in his ploughing he does not  
 like quarrels [lit. "anger"]. He does not support warfare, he does not  
 follow it; he does not do violence to anyone for the sake of his goods.  
 He'll not be too harsh on us; he'll not pursue an even moderately wrong claim;  
 nothing is fitting but to suffer it. There is neither life nor world  
 without him. I know that it is a hundred times more pleasant to him,  
 in his quiet tedious way, to hold (I don't care to blame him much),  
 the bent plough and the goad, than that he were an Arthur, the plunderer,  
 when he stormed a tower.)

Here, then, is Christian doctrine lived. The charity, meekness, and faith of Iolo's ploughman correspond to those of Langland's and Chaucer's. His role as provider of society is recognized too:

Nid bywyd nid byd heb ef  
(1. 24)

and, this role is emphasized as the poet itemizes those dependent on the ploughman's labor:

Ni cheffir eithr o'i weithred  
Aberth Crist i borthi cred.  
Bywyd ni chaiff, ni beiwn,  
Pab nac ymherawdr heb hwn,  
Na brenin haelwin hoywlyw,  
Dien ei bwyll, na dyn byw.  
(11. 1-6, p. 80)

(Trans: Nor is there had, except by his actions, Christ's sacrifice to feed the faithful. Pope nor emperor gets no life without him (I wouldn't blame it), nor generous, wine-giving king, an active lord whose wisdom is pleasant, nor living man.)

The ploughman is dutiful in paying his tithe:

O rhoddes, hael yw'r hoywdduw,  
Offrwm a'i ddegwm i Dduw,  
Enaid da yna uniawn  
A dâl i Ddu dyly ddawn.  
(11. 9-12, p. 79)

(Trans: If he has given, generous is the fair Lord, his offering and tithe to God, a good and upright soul will he then render to God, deserving favor.)

It will be remembered that Chaucer's ploughman honored the same obligation:

His tithes payde he ful fair and wel,  
 Bothe of his propre swynk<sup>1</sup> and his catel.  
 (GP, ll. 539-40)

Several anonymous Middle English poems extol the ploughman in much the same terms, presenting him, as Langland presented Piers, as Christ's representative here on earth. These shorter poems generally applaud the Laborer's work in the field, particularizing his ploughing, sowing, weeding and industry in all weather and all seasons.<sup>2</sup> In attitude and content, these poems reflect a critical awareness of social values and conditions. In general, this verse is neither profound nor exceptionally accomplished in poetic terms; it has historical value in so far as it elucidates the common man's vision, and, at times, when their passionate complaints against a particular wrong strike a note of heart-felt truth, these poems are stirring. The critical temper of the age was also to appear in a nascent literary criticism, consisting of debates on the relative values of the old and new poetic traditions. Such is at the root of Gruffudd Gryg's attack on Dafydd ap Gwilym and Llywelyn ap y Moel's criticism of Rhys Goch Eryri's praise of Gruffudd Llwyd as a love poet.

Yet, by the fourteenth century the medieval world had largely broken away from, or substantially transformed, earlier literary conventions. In most countries of Western Europe the poets expanded the boundaries of the earlier conventions, borrowing, either directly or indirectly,

<sup>1</sup>toil

<sup>2</sup>These poems may be found in Robbins' anthology of Historical Poems, op. cit., especially No. 2 and No. 37. Since they essentially repeat the items we have already covered, there is not much to be gained by analyzing them here.

from foreign traditions, and expanding the literary possibilities of their own vernaculars in both style and theme. Perhaps the most significant thematic development of the Middle Ages was the notion of courtly (and romantic) love which, as C. S. Lewis has justifiably argued,<sup>1</sup> has had enormous consequences for literary history ever since. It is to this topic that we now turn.

#### LOVE AND THE BELOVED IN MEDIEVAL POETRY

Common to Europe and Wales alike was the celebration of love, often taking the form of amor courtois. In fact, such a high proportion of the cywyddwyr's verse is love poetry that one gets the impression that all other themes ran a poor second - with the obvious exception of panegyric. And while nature poetry as a separate genre is certainly present in Welsh, many of the passages of natural description that the poets single out often appear within amatory verse. In fact, the depiction of nature and the seasons as a common introductory topos has already been discussed in Chapter IV. In the following pages we will see the ways in which the Welsh poets introduce greater precision (and their own native landscape), into the topos as it is found in the love poetry.

Most frequently, whenever one encounters critical discussions of medieval love, the assumption is made that medieval love is courtly love. At this point it should be noted that I, joining the company of several modern researchers, am not convinced that there ever was so tightly

<sup>1</sup>

The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958).



conceived and rigidly structured a system as C. S. Lewis and others of his generation and discipleship have accepted. But as this is a subject that cannot be followed up here, I wish only to forward two grounds for this belief. First, the insistence that all troubadour songs were composed for married women is untenable. Second, following Peter Dronke's reasoning, it is not necessary to see the ideas of amor courtois as the unique products of chivalric social conditions.<sup>1</sup> At any time under most social structures, man will tend to include the courtois in his conception of love; poets will normally develop an idealized attitude towards love and the beloved which will be expressed in hyperbolic language, which will be seen in the idealization of the lady and the celebration of the emotions she occasions in him. That's what love poetry is all about. This is not to say that medieval Europe did not share this concept of love, or that there is not a recognizable treatment of love among poets of the period; the point is that the language of love-worship is not necessarily original in Provençal verse. Since we are not here concerned with ultimate sources or anterior traditions it is best to stop with this. For convenience, we shall refer to the medieval European tradition of amatory verse as courtly love.

One can isolate and examine a number of related pockets of ideas that medieval Welsh bards shared with the poets of Western Europe (*i. e.*, the troubadours, trouveres, Minnesangers, stilnovisti, Goliards and

<sup>1</sup>Peter Dronke, Medieval Latin and the Rise of the European Love-Lyric. 2nd. ed. (OUP, 1965). This thesis is forwarded in Chapter I.

writers of late Latin poetry generally). At this point I would like to see these ideas as "coinciding" with features of the courtly love system. In isolating what is common to both from what is varied and individual, one learns that it is over-simplified to claim that Dafydd ap Gwilym or Madog Benfras or others of the cywyddwyr derived their language of love, or their ideas of love, from, say, Ovid or Bernard de Ventadour; but it would be just as simplistic to insist that the Welsh poets were totally unaware of the rest of the medieval literary world. It is, of course, possible that the Welsh poets took from the European tradition (at whatever degree removed) certain separable motifs which were easily exploited. And it would be very useful for us to know the avenues through which Welsh writers - as well as medieval writers generally - acquired their knowledge of certain topoi or rhetorical techniques, but too often whatever learning a medieval author acquired was assimilated by methods hard to check: lost manuscripts, oral transmission, and the like.

The love poetry of medieval Wales was the topic of a colloquium held at Gregynog in the summer of 1972. Several of the papers, recently published by the University of Wales,<sup>1</sup> concentrate on the verse of Dafydd ap Gwilym, though Peter Dronke and Séan Ó Tuama investigate corollary medieval poetic traditions. The essay by Dronke is devoted to a consideration of fabliau and courtly elements in the European Latin lyric and follows the lines of his earlier investigations into the topic.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>John Rowlands, ed., Dafydd ap Gwilym: A Chanu Serch yr Oesoedd Canol (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1975).

<sup>2</sup>Medieval Latin and the Rise of the European Love-Lyric, 2 vols. (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1965), and The Medieval Lyric (Hutchinson University Library, 1968).

Professor Ó Tuama's paper, "Serch Cwrtais mewn Llenyddiaeth Wyddeleg," reviews features of courtly love in medieval Irish verse and concludes that the influence of the continental tradition was general rather than particular, that native lyric imagery, homely elements, and traditional forms were super-imposed on the foreign models. Mrs. Bromwich's essay, "Dafydd ap Gwilym: Y Traddodiad Islenyddol," draws the same conclusions as they apply to Dafydd. Here Mrs. Bromwich emphasizes the popular, sub-literary inheritance which she believes to have been the single, most important influence on Dafydd's work although she acknowledges the difficulty of certain proof in the absence of extant texts, and grants that foreign influences pre-date Dafydd's age.

Both Mrs. Bromwich and Professor Ó Tuama agree that the Celtic poets re-shaped the courtly love tradition in the course of the two centuries preceding the Dánta Grádha and Dafydd ap Gwilym, so that by the fourteenth century earlier native adaptations had left their unmistakable imprint. In the poetry of Dafydd ap Gwilym, according to Mrs. Bromwich, the native mark is most discernible in his use of birds, in the opening formula Fal yr oeddwn, and in the highly ornamented form of his verse.

In the following pages I will outline in more detail the major likenesses, modifications, and differences between Welsh and continental treatments of love.

#### Ideas and Motifs Common to Medieval European and Welsh Love Poetry.

As did the poets of northern France and England, Welsh poets, too, modified whatever conventions that are likely to have been borrowed. Thus, in the treatment of what is common to the traditions, so much modification is sometimes made that the common denominator may be felt to have disappeared altogether.

1) A concept central to "courtly love" is the high, and at times, profound, value placed on it. While in the verse of prominent continental poets (Raimbaut d'Orange, Guido Cavalcanti, Dante, Heinrich von Morungen, to name a few) this is clearly the case, it is less insisted upon in Welsh poetry. The idea may be there, as in Dafydd's remarks to the Grey Friar (Y Bardd a'r Brawd Llwyd; GDG 137), but it does not occupy a major place in the Welsh canon, nor does one find extended ruminative passages devoted to the analysis of the emotion of love, or to love qua love. A much favored theme in medieval Latin, French and Italian verse, such declamations pass into statements which are almost purely politic and dialectic. Basically, while the Welsh amatory verse shares something of the emotional content of the "courtly" lyric, it incorporates little, if anything, of its intellectual content. This will be more clearly understood in the later discussion of points of divergence between Welsh and European practices.

2) A natural corollary to the supreme value placed on love is the perception of the lady as le culte d'un objet excellent. Thus the hyperbolic descriptions accorded her find varied and imaginative expression among all love poets. Yet in their choice of images and expressive devices the Welsh bards are often identifiably different, introducing descriptive detail that is distinctly native, even though the thematic material into which such are introduced may be part of a literary tradition borrowed (however indirectly) from the continent.

3) Since the lady is so excellent a prize, attaining her is a difficult task, requiring perseverance, protestations of passion and

enduring devotion, and gifts of verse written in her honor. The endurance of hardship and pain, constancy and fidelity are equally paramount. Loyalty and fidelity as welcome and elevating qualities, however, figure much more prominently in continental love poetry than they do in Welsh. As we know, Dafydd ap Gwilym was ever capable of turning from Morfudd to Dyddgu, and to others as well, almost literally at the turn of a phrase. See, for instance, his poem jointly to Morfudd a Dyddgu (GDG 79) where he coolly reviews the virtues of each; or his ~~futile~~ pursuit of the girls of Llanbadarn (GDG 48), or his courting the girl in the tavern (GDG 124).

Nonetheless, Dafydd's efforts, which are representative of Welsh poets as a whole, at wooing a maid are conventionally arduous. The lady is sometimes scornful, often unrelenting, cruel and cold, as she must be if she is to be rated so high a prize. Or so the argument would seem to go. And that the winning of her should be so difficult is equally essential to the "courtly love" system. There, as in some medieval Latin verse, the value is often in the labor involved, and the ultimate achievement is intimately related to its difficulty. Understandably, then, the lady is not easily stirred to pity or submission. In the case of Welsh poetry, the way to fulfillment is fraught with rejections, with physical discomfort (see GDG 80, Tri Phorthor Eiddig; the vividly graphic picture of the wretched lover in GDG 89, Dan y Bargod ), with complications and difficulties in the guise of the jealous husband, the slanderous neighbors and prying eyes. But though the achieving of the girl may be dangerous, uncomfortable, or protracted, nowhere in Welsh verse can I find any intimation that the pain the poet-lover suffers is valuable in itself.

This difference is an important notional one. Parenthetically, one might here remark on Gruffudd Gryg's poetic mockery of Dafydd's wounds in Ymryson Dafydd ap Gwilym a Gruffudd Gryg (GDG 147).

4) Stemming from the above is the role of the lover as servant. Even here, however, the Welsh poet, though he may willingly assume a vassal's stance upon occasion, does not regularly assume this position or all the features that pertain to it as expressed in continental verse. In his role as suppliant, or in his expressions of despair, in his lack of sleep and through his "wounds," the Welsh bardic lover matches the troubadour, Minnesanger, stilnovisti and trouvère. But, it is important to remember that the Welsh bards were not courtiers; and this informs the difference in manner between much of the continental verse and the Welsh poetry. The courtier's role demanded he cultivate a manner in which he could approach his noble mistress. The Welsh bard might play the courtly lover, but it is unlikely that fourteenth-century Wales could or did<sup>s</sup> provide the kind of in-grown and self-contained courtly milieu in which the poetic-courtier's professions of love were often regarded as courtly entertainment, of prestige to be won or lowered. This is not to say that the continental poet did not dramatize himself as Lover, or that Dafydd did not regard his verse as an instrument of entertainment or prestige.

The problem for the modern reader is, of course, whether or not he believes the emotions of the courtly love poet. This is an issue of historical taste, certainly, but even within the historical period of the Middle Ages one can discern differences in tone. And, as Ó Tuama



has argued, it is a difference in tone which distinguishes the French poetry from the Irish, for in the French there is often a notable difference between the lover and his love. In Irish, on the other hand, the beloved is not usually a dame souveraine, but the bard's equal, despite his subservience. This applies equally to the Welsh. Although Dyddgu's noble breeding is recognized (GDG 45), the treatment accorded her does not differ substantially from that accorded Morfudd. And though both reduce Dafydd to submission, neither is developed as a dame souveraine.

In summing up the points so far made, one can say that the Welsh poets seem to have more marked affinities with the light-hearted amatoria of the vagantes where the "courtly" ideal of love is tempered by a healthy enjoyment of life and by gleams of ironic humor. This correspondence was noticed first by Ifor Williams<sup>1</sup> and has since become a commonplace in the criticism. And it is demonstrable enough. For Dafydd, it is not the habit "to give the heart away so that no part remains."

5) Extra-marital love appears in both traditions and has been the subject of several inquiries, most particularly, Chotzen's highly influential book on Dafydd.<sup>2</sup> Eiddig has recognizable and established points of convergence with the Jaloux. Nor can one discount or underestimate the similarities of the malmariée, or Dafydd's own claim, "I love none but married women:"

<sup>1</sup>Ifor Williams, "Dafydd ap Gwilym a'r Gler," Trans. Hon. Soc. Cymm. (1913 - 1914), pp. 83-204.

<sup>2</sup>Theodor M. Chotzen, Recherches sur la Poésie de Dafydd ap Gwilym (Amsterdam, 1927).

Ni charaf ond merch wriawg<sup>1</sup>

It is now commonly accepted that the figures of Bwa Bach, of the young wife, and of Dafydd's pose as a lover in orders are derived from the fabliau manipulation of the courtly love tradition.

One might here consider some of the accessories of the system which are found in varying degrees in Welsh poetry. Images drawn from religion and medicine are scattered through the Welsh love poetry and are ultimately derived from the courtly love tradition. The most conspicuous example of the religious impulse is found in Dafydd's Offeren y Llwyn (GDG 122) whose similarities with Jean de Condé's La Messe des Oiseaux have been reviewed by Rachel Bromwich.<sup>2</sup> Yet, by and large, Dafydd's language of worship is more regularly found in his descriptions of nature. In fact, in the love poetry the concept of healing and salvation finds minimal expression in Welsh. Nowhere does it approach the philosophic overtones that one finds in continental verse where health = salvation and healing mistress = the savior; for in just such a semi-religious way the Lat. salus, Prov. and OFr. salut, saluz, Ital. salute, and MHG. heil are used of the beloved throughout their love lyrics.

Secrecy is a stock motif, dictated practically by the adulterous nature of the love, but subsequently accorded a more elevated,

<sup>1</sup>"I Eiddig," p. 8, line 30 in Ifor Williams and T. Roberts, eds., Cywyddau Dafydd ap Gwilym a'i Gyfoeswyr (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1935).

<sup>2</sup>Tradition and Innovation in the Poetry of Dafydd ap Gwilym, op. cit., p. 34, and, more recently in "Dafydd ap Gwilym: Y Traddodiad Islenyddol," op. cit., p. 47.



virtuous, status in so far as love was regarded as holy and not to be profaned by public revelation. The Carmina Burana illustrates the convention:

nomen tamen domine serva palliatum,  
ut non sit in populo illud divulgatum,  
quod secretum gentibus extat et celatum.<sup>1</sup>

and, elsewhere:

Quod agis, age tenebris;  
procul a fame palpebris  
letatur amor latebris  
et dulcibus illecebris  
cum murmure iocoso.<sup>2</sup>

The idea appears in Y Serch Lledrad (GDG 74), a poem whose opening lines have strong overtones of the courtly system.

Dysgais ddwyn cariad esgud,  
Diwladaidd, lledradaidd, drud.  
Gorau modd o'r geiriau mad  
Gael adrodd serch goledrad.  
(ll. 1-4)

(Trans: I have learned to carry on an active love affair, courteous, daring, and clandestine. Finding the best way in seemly words to tell of furtive love.)

Dafydd's use of the motif here rests not so much on the sanctity of a lofty love which he wishes to protect, nor even on the practical necessity of keeping it a secret from the lady's husband - for here there is no suggestion that his mistress is married. Instead, the desire for secrecy seems to be little more than a natural desire for privacy.

<sup>1</sup>Trans: "Keep, however, the name of the lady veiled; let not be divulged in public what appears private and hidden to the world."  
From George Whicher, ed., The Goliard Poets, op. cit., p. 50.

<sup>2</sup>Trans: "What you do, do it in the dark; far from the eyes of Gossip; love rejoices in hidden places and in sweet enticements with sportive murmur."

Y Wawr (GDG 129) falls more centrally into the amor courtois practice than many of Dafydd's poems. An aubade, the poem fulfills the basic requirements of the form: the lovers' dialogue at daybreak, the need to part quickly and stealthily in order to keep their tryst from prying eyes.

Peter Dronke contends that the need for secrecy results primarily from the notion that love is a mystery that must not be shared or profaned.<sup>1</sup> While this may be true of continental practice, it cannot be applied to Welsh, largely because continental attitudes imbued love with a spiritual and divine nature which does not enter medieval Welsh notions of love. This will become clearer in the discussion of the differences between the two traditions.

Symptomatic of the amor courtois system is the notion of pleroma, the intensity of a moment as opposed to length, the sense of the quality of the experience rather than the mere quantity.<sup>2</sup> In the courtly love experience this fulfillment is found in one night with the beloved. This idea is found at least once in the poetry of Dafydd ap Gwilym. In Y Wawr the night that he spent with his mistress was "eight nights in one:"

Wythnos fu unnos  
(1. 4)

The conceit of the garland, which Dronke associates with the flos florum, appears in the love poetry from an early date. Its application, however, often approaches symbolism in the learned Latin verse of the

<sup>1</sup>Medieval Latin and the Rise of the European Love Lyric, Vol. 1, op. cit., p. 48.

<sup>2</sup>Dronke discusses this concept in his treatment of the ideas behind the love lyrics; ibid., pp. 122-123.

period. Thus we find in the Acts of John, translated by Dronke,<sup>1</sup>  
the concept of similitudo:

O Jesus, you who have woven this garland  
by your own weaving, you who have united  
these many flowers into the immortal  
flower of your countenance.

Dante sees his lady wearing a garland of sweet flowers and in turn makes  
"a ballata of flowers" to adorn her.<sup>2</sup> Dafydd ap Gwilym turns this conceit  
into the brilliant image of the garland of peacock feathers (GDG 32).

A motif commonly associated with the courtly love tradition was the  
meeting of lovers at a religious service. This distinctly medieval use of  
the church as an environment in which love could be kindled is found in  
Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde (I, 162ff) where Troilus first sets eyes on  
Criseyde in the temple. Interesting examples include Dante's sight of Beatrice  
in a church at Florence and Petrarch's first sight of Laura at a service in  
Avignon.<sup>3</sup> Christine de Pisan uses it as the subject of a rondeau:

Se souvent vais au moustier,  
C'est tout pour veoir la belle  
Fresche com rose nouvelle.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Medieval Latin . . . the European Love Lyric, I, p. 184.

<sup>2</sup>Number 21 in Foster and Boyde, Vol. I, op. cit.

<sup>3</sup>Further examples are provided by Professor Griffin in the  
introduction to N. E. Griffin and A. B. Myrick, trans. The Filostrato  
(Philadelphia, 1929), p. 15.

<sup>4</sup>Trans: "If I often go to church it is all to see the lovely girl,  
fresh as a new-blown rose." Rondeau in The Penguin Book of French  
Verse, I, Brian Woledge, trans. and ed. (Baltimore, 1966), p. 249.

Dafydd's Merched Llanbadarn (GDG 48) falls well within this tradition.

### Welsh Treatments of Love: Points of Divergence

1) In the preceding discussion it was noted that Welsh poets do not assign to love the spiritualizing or ennobling properties that are often associated with it in continental and Latin poetry of the period. Notably absent is the notion of coincidentia appositorum, that love unites within itself all contrary qualities, the whole of existence,<sup>1</sup> earthly and heavenly, joy and sorrow. Such a concept explains the dialectic cast of much continental verse and the often hieratic images found in such poets as Dante, Cavalcanti, Arnaut Daniel. Among the stilnovisti, for instance, one meets ideas and language frequently found in mystic writing on divine love. A composite of ideas and images emerges: the lady as radiant (clara is a universal of love praise) who brings illumination; she is gracious (benivola, that generosity of the spirit that stems from God); she is associated with sapientia, the active agent or force in the soul which brings wisdom. The poet's preoccupation with her divine status rests on his belief that earthly love can foreshadow or be an image of divine love. Into this pattern further images from the flos florum are introduced, as well as ideas and images from Marian hymnology, particularly those of the lily and the rose.

Dante's lyric poetry affords numerous examples of the intellectualization and spiritual equation of love. I here include some extensive

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This notion finds expression in Gottfried's Tristan and Chaucer's Troilus - both of which are conceived almost entirely against the background of this notion. I am greatly indebted to Peter Dronke's discussion of these points in Medieval Latin . . . the European Love Lyric, Chapters II and IV.

excerpts from his poetry because they elucidate the idea so precisely.

Amor che ne la mente mi ragiona  
de la mia donna disiosamente,  
move cose di lei mecco sovente  
che lo 'ntelletto sovr'esse disvia. . . .<sup>1</sup>  
(11. 1-4)

Ogni Intelletto di la su la mira,  
e quella gente che qui s'innamora  
ne' lor pensieri la truovano ancora,  
quando Amor fa sentir de la sua pace. . . .<sup>2</sup>  
(11. 23-26)

In lei discende la virtu divina  
si come face in angelo che 'l vede. . . .<sup>3</sup>  
(11. 37-38)

Quivi dov'ella parla, si dichina  
un spirito da ciel, che reca fede  
come l'alto valor ch'ella possiede  
e oltre quel che si conviene a nui.<sup>4</sup>  
(11. 41-44)

Consider, too, Dante's statement on the ennobling effects of love:

e qual soffrisse di starla a vedere  
diverria nobil cosa, o si morria.<sup>5</sup>  
(11. 35-36)

<sup>1</sup>Trans: From the Foster and Boyde edition; poem 61, Vol. I: "Love, speaking fervently in my mind of my lady, often utters such things concerning her that my intellect is bewildered by them."

<sup>2</sup>"All Intelligences on high gaze at her, and those who here below are in love still find her in their thoughts, when Love brings them to partake of his peace."

<sup>3</sup>Trans: Again, from Foster and Boyde: "The divine goodness that descends into her in the same way as into an angel that sees Him."

<sup>4</sup>"Whenever she speaks a spirit comes down from heaven to testify that the high perfection she possesses transcends our measure."

<sup>5</sup>Number 33 in Vol. I of Foster and Boyde: "And were any such person able to stay and regard her, he would either become noble or die."

Earlier, Arnaut Daniel had expressed much the same attitude:

Tot jorn meillur et esmeri,  
Car la gensor serv e coli  
El mon - so.us dic en apert.<sup>1</sup>  
(III, ll. 8-10)

Nothing comparable to this is found in Welsh. The closest one comes to such an abstract or elevating notion of love and the beloved is in Dafydd ap Gwilym's conception of Morfudd as the sun (GDG 42), a poem which Dr. Parry accurately described as exploiting all the possibilities that the comparison allowed.<sup>2</sup> In this poem Dafydd most clearly approaches allegory.<sup>3</sup> But though Morfudd is clearly personified as the sun, Dafydd does not develop the equation to include anagogical associations as some of the continental poets commonly did. It is the bright, pervasive beauty of Morfudd and her power over his senses that Dafydd wishes to describe. His choice of the sun as a metaphoric vehicle allows him to emphasize both her singular radiance and her inaccessibility.

If we compare Dafydd's description of Morfudd as the sun to similar continental descriptions, significant notional differences emerge. For the stilnovisti, many of the troubadours and Minnesangers, celestial phenomena became the mechanisms for describing the lady's ethereal perfection of spirit. In describing her as a source of lumen (not mere lux) the poets emphasized the divine stature of the human beloved.

<sup>1</sup>"Each day I improve and grow more pure, for I serve and worship the most noble in the world - this I can tell you openly." Anthology of Troubadour Lyric Verse, ed. Alan Press (Edinburgh, 1971), pp. 182-183.

<sup>2</sup>Oxford Book of Welsh Verse (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1962), p. 544.

<sup>3</sup>Dronke, Medieval Latin . . . the European Love Lyric, Vol. II, p. 125.



Both the beloved and the Virgin Mary were often apostrophized as the  
<sup>1</sup>  
 sun in sapiential verse. The Song of Songs draws upon images of light:

quasi aurora consurgens, pulchra ut  
 electa ut sol. . . .

Heinrich von Morungen, perhaps more than most of his contemporaries,  
<sup>2</sup>  
 attached anagogical associations to figures of light. In his "Diu vil  
<sup>3</sup>  
 guote, daz si saelic mueze sin" (K 19), "Heinrich's image undergoes a . . .  
 metamorphosis" in which the sun is perceived as a "vision of the perfect  
 absolute love-union."

But in the Middle English Harley Lyrics, as in most of the Welsh  
 examples, celestial phenomena (sun, moon, stars) are merely figures of  
 comparison used in hyperbolic descriptions. Thus the Middle English poet  
 depicts his lady:

Ase sonnebem hire bleo ys briht;  
 in vche londe heo leomeþ liht. . . .

þe mone wiþ hire muchele maht  
 ne lenep non such lyht anaht  
 (þat is in heouene he3e)  
 ase hire forhed doþ in day.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>  
 This usage is discussed, with examples, by Dronke in Medieval Latin  
 and . . . European Love Lyric, Chapter I.

<sup>2</sup>  
 See Margaret F. Roche, Essays on the Medieval German Love Lyric  
 (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1943), pp. 45-50.

<sup>3</sup>  
 K 19 in Carl von Kraus, ed., Heinrich von Morungen (Munich, 1950).

<sup>4</sup>  
 "Her complexion is as bright as a sunbeam; she shines light in each  
 land. . . . The moon (which is in high heaven) with her great power  
 does not give such light at night as her forehead does in day." The Fair  
 Maid of Ribblesdale, in G. L. Brook, ed., The Harley Lyrics (Manchester  
 University Press, 1964).

Llywelyn Goch ap Meurig Hen in his Marwnad Lleucu Llwyd<sup>1</sup> describes Lleucu as:

dyn loer degwch

(Trans: Girl of the beauty of the moon.)

and perceives her loss as the absence of the moon, of light and of color:

na lloer, na llewych, na lliw.

Certainly one of the most popular aggregates of images among the cywyddwyr is the group of celestial phenomena. The girl is commonly: eirian hwyl fuan haul Fai (GDG 35, l. 26: "brilliant as the swift-journeying sun in May"); goleuder haul (GDG 42, l. 6: "brightness of the sun"); cyfliw haul (Madog Benfras in OBWV 48, l. 2: "hue of the sun"); huanwedd haul (Llywelyn Goch in OBWV 49, l. 18: "sun-like face"). Or, the Welsh poets use the moon to achieve the same effect: wiwloer (GDG 80, l. 26: "excellent moon"); lloer wyneb (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 3, l. 15: "moon's face"). There seems to be no sharp differentiation between the images of the sun and the moon. Either could be used to describe the girl's lustre. One of the standard variations is found in the formula "Gwynedd's moon," or "Gwynedd's candle" which appears in GDG 114 (leuad Wynedd; l. 46); GDG 111 (cannwyll Gwynedd; l. 22); as "Gwynedd's sun" in GDG 128 (haul Wynedd; l. 5); and, again, in Llywelyn Goch's eulogy to Lleucu Llwyd, cannwyll Wynedd (OBWV, l. 11).

<sup>1</sup>Number 49 in The Oxford Book of Welsh Verse, op. cit.



It is not in their use of solar or lunar imagery that the Welsh poets most distinguish themselves, but in their skilful transformation of nature and of everyday, practical realities into images of great vitality or delicacy. This particular talent and its application will be reviewed after a consideration of the following points.

2) A. part of the great value that continental poets placed on love was the sense of joi, a sense of heightened life which resulted from love. This notion is at the heart of the Minnesang.<sup>1</sup> The love poetry of the troubadours abounds with this sense of joi, which is, according to Dronke and other critics, to be understood as a "quality of mind, and attitude to life and a way of life," rather than merely a particular feeling.<sup>2</sup> It is, perhaps, best expressed by Bernard de Ventadour:

Ben es totz om d'avol vida  
C'ab joi non a son estatge;  
E qui vas amor no guida  
So cor e so dezirer;  
Car tot can es s'abandona  
Vas joi, e refrim'e sona:  
Prat e debes e verger,  
Landas e pla e boschatge.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This concept, hoher muot to the Minnesang, appears in the verse of Heinrich von Morungen (No. 64, st. 3; No. 69, st. 22 in Olive Sayce's edition, Poets of the Minnesang; Oxford University Press, 1967). It occurs also in the verse of Reimar von Hagenau, Walther von der Vogelweide, and Neidhart von Reuentel, Nos. 87, 100, and 122 respectively, in the Sayce edition.

<sup>2</sup>Dronke, op. cit., p. 37. Cf. A. J. Denomy's richly documented "Jois Among the Early Troubadours: Its Meaning and Possible Sources," Med. St., XIII (1951), pp. 177ff.

<sup>3</sup>Trans: "Any man is of base life who has not his dwelling with joy and who doesn't direct heart and desires towards love, since all that is gives itself up to joy, and rings and is full of song: meadows and parklands and orchards, heathlands and plains and woods." Text and translation from Alan Press, ed., Anthology of Troubadour Lyric Poetry (Edinburgh University Press, 1971), pp. 68-69.

The service of love in Welsh poetry does not induce in the lover such a state of exaltation, and this I find one of the most curious departures from the literary conventions of the Middle Ages. Though the Welsh poets suffered agonies enough, they never investigated the state of joy. The answer, perhaps, is that failing to see a redemptive value in suffering, and, in fact, seeing that suffering quite simplistically as the absence of physical gratification, the poets would not be inclined to attach importance to exaltation - itself a mental state, but preferred instead to concentrate on physical pleasure and dis-pleasure. The improving effect on man's soul was apparently not a concept that occurred to them.

3) Possibly for this reason the Welsh bards did not insist upon the lady's nobility. The Welsh mistress did not have to be a lady of rank, whereas in continental poetry, and often in Chaucer, the gentillesse of the beloved was imperative.<sup>1</sup> Even the Harley Lyrics, notably popular in origin and never intended for an aristocratic class, describe the lady in terms of her courtesy and good breeding: she is gentil, henny (gracious, with strong overtones of "courteous"), menskful (noble), and fyn (in the sense of "skilled"). A possible explanation for the scarcity of such descriptions among the Welsh bards may be that these poets were not bound by feudal traditions. And, as we will see shortly, by remaining distinctly indebted to an evocative native tradition, their descriptive and hyperbolic passages emerge richer in imagery and detail.

<sup>1</sup>Note that for both Cavalcanti and Dante, gentilezza can be independent of birth and wealth. This is also true of Chaucer in some instances, the idea of gentillesse most fully expressed by the loathly lady in the Wife of Bath's Tale.

When describing a girl in what would ordinarily be a fairly lifeless image, Welsh bards make it immediately electric by subjecting it to their native lens. One of the most effective of these images is that of foam, or waves. To a Welsh bard, a girl is more frequently "the color of foam" (eiliw ewyn; GDG 137, l. 21) than the color of a lily. Consider, for example, the freshness of the following images from Dafydd's poetry:

eirwgaen wedd  
("foam's filmy form;" GDG 85, l. 13)

lliw distrych llif  
("the color of the flood's foam;" GDG 54, l. 54)

Or, in the same poem, the particularization which adds texture and immediacy to the image:

ne caregryd nant  
("of the color of the stony ford of a brook," l. 52)

Similar to the above, and combining them in one comprehensive image, is Iolo Goch's description of the girl in I Ferch:

Ceginwrych geirwddwfr crych croyw  
("tremulous foam from a fresh rippling river;" l. 6)

and, from the same poem:

Llewych dwr crych ar dor craig  
("gleam of bubbling water over the swell of a rock;" l. 12)

Whenever I encounter this image I am struck by the remarkable vitality and delicacy of it.<sup>1</sup> It would be hard to find in any continental poet an image that is more strikingly natural and appropriate.

<sup>1</sup>There are many other examples of this image. Cf., for instance, GDG 42, l. 4; GDG 98, l. 42; GDG 111, l. 2; GDG 67, l. 1; OBWV 48, p. 73, l. 12; etc.

The Welsh poets develop much the same effect with images of snow. Though one finds snow as a descriptive vehicle among other poets, its use elsewhere is limited and static; it is never accorded the precision of detail that the Welsh poets achieve. Snow for the continental poets was simply and singly used without further particularization to signify whiteness of a lady's cheek, neck, complexion, brow. And most often its use is comparative: "whiter than snow." In the hands of the Welsh cywyddwyr, however, this lifeless image receives added definition. This particularization may be achieved merely by the added specification of a winter month: lliw eiry Ionawr (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 3, 1. 15: "hue of a January snow"), or: lliw eira bas ar lasgraig (IGE<sup>2</sup>. 3, 1. 11: "hue of shallow snow on grey stone"). For Dafydd ap Gwilym, Dyddgu is gwynnach nog eiry y gwanwyn (GDG 45, 1. 25: "whiter than snow in springtime"), a fairly prosaic image, but one which leads into one of the most coherent and evocative metaphors in his canon, the description of Peredur's gazing on the snow spotted with blood.

Perhaps not as dynamic, but on its own quite good, is the description of the girl in GDG 33: hoen eiry di-frisg ("color of untrodden snow," 1. 18). Elsewhere Dafydd compares Morfudd to "the color of fine snow on the plain of the seastrand" (Gorlliw eiry man marian maes; GDG 42, 1. 2). This is not to say that Dafydd and his contemporaries were incapable of more pedestrian images. To this category I would assign: eiry man hoen ("color of fine snow;" GDG 85, 1. 24); deune'r eiry ("twice as bright as snow;" GDG 35, 1. 2); arleislefn ddyn eiry lwysliw ("smooth-templed girl of

snow-white hue;" IGE<sup>2</sup>. 4, 1. 21), and many other that need no mention here.

Imaginative though it is with descriptive permutations of "white," Welsh poetry rarely uses the image of the lily. In one of his rare uses of the lily, Dafydd adds his characteristic touch; he describes the seagull as a "lily of the sea" (lili môr; GDG 118, 1. 8) and thus converts a fairly ordinary comparison into a striking and imaginative metaphor. His description of Morfudd's brow as a "bunch of lilies" (Talm o alaw; GDG 53, 1. 3) is not particularly effective.

More often the Welsh poets used native flowers for figures of comparison, as is exemplified in Iolo Goch's: cegiden bebyrwen babl ("brilliant white, thriving hemlock;" IGE<sup>2</sup>. 3, 1. 7).

Apart from the few examples above, only a handful of comparisons to the lily appear in Welsh, several of them occurring in the romances.<sup>1</sup> This slim sample of references to one of the two principal flowers in the late Latin and medieval European literary tradition is remarkable. If the Welsh poets drew heavily on this tradition in their love poetry, it seems impossible for them to have avoided incorporating a core of flos florum conceits, particularly those of the lily and the rose. From Venantius Fortunatus through the Latin Middle Ages in both Latin

<sup>1</sup>gwynnach oed nor alaw ("it was whiter than the lily;" WM 207. 5-6; perhaps: hwyteit yn llynn gwynn alaw ("ducks on the pond, the lily is white;" No. III, st. 31 in K. H. Jackson's edition of Early Welsh Gnostic Poems; Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1935); dwbled fal mil o'r lili ("a doublet like a thousand lilies;" No. 28, 1. 27 in D. J. Bowen's edition, Barddoniaeth Yr Uchelwyr; (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1957)).

lyrics and the vernaculars, the poetic canon (secular and religious)  
<sup>1</sup>  
 is saturated with images of the rose and the lily.

On the other hand, neither does one find the common domestic referents for whiteness, particularly "milk," which is an invariable standard for whiteness in the descriptio pulchritudinis. So indiscriminate were the writers of the popular English lyrics that "milk-white cheeks" displace the lily in hack portraits and take the lily's place in the rose-red : lily-white association.

In place of so ordinary an image the Welsh bards substituted the following figures of comparison in describing a lady's whiteness:

bryd hoyw wylan (GDG 128, 61; "color of a lively seagull")

lliw'r calch (GDG 53, 31); "chalk-colored")

lliw papir (GDG 137, 22; "hue of paper")

gwen, dalcen dis (BYU 31, 27: "White one, forehead of dice white")

eiliw mangant (Llywelyn Goch in OBWV 49, p. 77; "color of  
 fine white flour")

Possibly less remarkable, but indicative of the Welsh poet's development of his own repertoire, are the many comparisons of the lady with gossamer. A few of them are singular and dextrous, most of them are conventional artifice. In the first category, Iolo Goch's effective image, from a poem that is basically an aggregate of images, illustrates the successful addition of detail:

<sup>1</sup>

Dronke surveys the development of the tradition, and supplies examples in Medieval Latin . . . European Love Lyric, pp. 180-185.



fal lliw gwawn ar rew  
 ("like the hue of frosty gossamer:" IGE<sup>2</sup>. 3, 1. 27)

Gold, a standard figure of excellence in heraldry, in sacred writings, and in the romances, is commonly applied to women by all poets. In general, Welsh bards do not put gold to any novel application. As was the case with a number of images reviewed above, Welsh poetic use of this figure ranges from the general and imprecise to images supplemented by particularized detail, and it is the latter which I have come to associate with Welsh verse.

One finds a number of stylized examples which simply use gold as a qualifying adjective: Morfudd is the "hue of gold" (wawr euraid; GDG 53, 1. 38), while elsewhere Dafydd describes his blond mistress with "fine golden hair" (fanwallt aur; GDG 57, 1. 4) as his "golden girl" (eurchwaer; GDG 122, 1. 10). In a more exquisite image, she is depicted as his "web of gold" (gwe o aur; GDG 42, 1. 13), or, in a more dramatic one, she is a "golden hostage" (euraid wystl; GDG 35, 1. 28).

Though there are occasional references to the lady as a goddess (~~GDG 35, 1. 5~~; OBWV 48, p. 73, 1. 11) and fewer references to her as "my soul" (GDG 42, 1. 16; OBWV 50, p. 79, 1. 19; OBWV 49, p. 77, 1. 19), the infrequent attributions markedly differentiate Welsh love poetry from continental practice. The reason, no doubt, is clearly related to the absence of a strongly allegorized conception of love.

It is evident that Welsh poets, if they borrowed from continental or late Latin traditions at all (as most modern critics think they did, at least as far as the love poetry is concerned), did so in a fairly selective way. Or, as Mrs. Bromwich would suggest, the love

poetry of the fourteenth-century poets was so far removed from the original sources of influence, and so filtered through a native lens that it has emerged in striking contrast to what we have come to regard as the convention of amor courtois. While I would not underestimate the process of assimilation, the germ was almost certainly foreign, and most of Mrs. Bromwich's examples of influence from the sub-literary, popular tradition (e. g., Dafydd's use of birds and his ascription of speech to them, the dream-vision, and the custom of going to church to greet a girl) have strong analogues in medieval Latin and vernacular poetry.

The conventions of courtly love had become firmly established by the fourteenth century in most of the countries of Western Europe. In fact, by this century the tradition was largely vitiated, reduced to a mechanical expression identical in manner and idiom. The range of vocabulary and expressive devices in the poetry of Dafydd ap Gwilym, and in some of the passages of his contemporaries, save the convention from wooden banality.

The preceding study suggests that several medieval Welsh poets were operating within a tradition that was not exclusively native, that such poets as Dafydd ap Gwilym and Iolo Goch regularly incorporated rhetorical features into their verse, even if they nowhere found them expressly formulated. Taken alone, one mannerism of style or a few examples of borrowed topoi may not count for much, but as an aggregate they challenge the view that in the realm of poetry (with the exception of the love poetry), Welsh culture maintained an insularity of tradition.



Yet, what ultimately separates one poet from his contemporaries is the individualizing stamp of his style and vision, his particular manipulation of shared conventions. In this area, Dafydd ap Gwilym stands with Geoffrey Chaucer, Dante, and Bernart de Ventadorn.

That all these poets drew upon common literary conventions is a matter of historical imperative. The terms of panegyric, the rhetorical topoi and commonplaces, as well as humor and attack, are founded on convention. It is a critical cliché that the lion lies down with the lamb. Accordingly, from the same pen issues both the sensitively graceful lyric and the earthy realism of vituperatio. The poetry of the cywyddwyr is rich and variegated. It is decidedly medieval in many particulars, but it is also distinctly and agreeably Welsh.